SIX WEEKS SOUTH OF TEXAS by LESLIE T. WHITE

15¢

Adventure

A POPULAR PUBLICATION

JUNE

GENE HENRY
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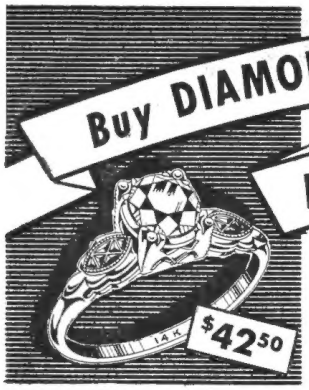

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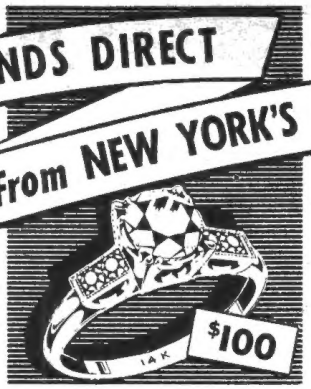

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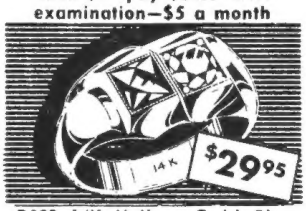

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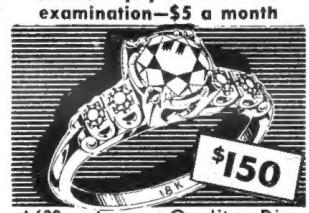

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- Straightening bent rotor plates

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How to locate defective soldered joints
- Inside story of carbon resistors

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How condensers become shorted, leaky
Antenna, oscillator coil facts
Power transformer, construction, possible troubles
Installing power cord
Troubles of combination volume control, on-off switch
Tone controls
Dial lamp connections
Receiver servicing technique:
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- Testing tubes
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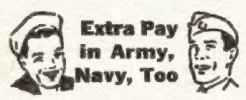

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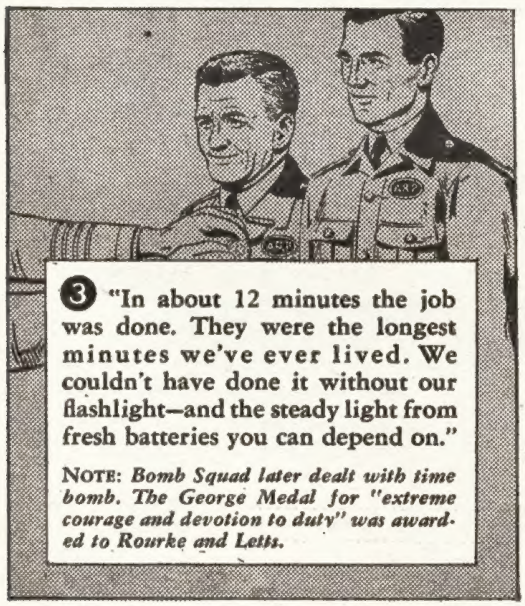
1 "The night sky was filled with enemy planes, and the earth shook with explosions. At the height of the raid we learned a bomb had smashed a gas main near the works. Rourke and I volunteered for the fixing job...

2 "We found it," continued Rourke. "A big delayed action bomb sitting on a severed pipe in the middle of a three-foot crater. We set to work. Letts held the flashlight, taking care to shield it so the Nazis couldn't see it, while I blocked the broken pipe with clay.



3 "In about 12 minutes the job was done. They were the longest minutes we've ever lived. We couldn't have done it without our flashlight—and the steady light from fresh batteries you can depend on."

NOTE: *Bomb Squad later dealt with time bomb. The George Medal for "extreme courage and devotion to duty" was awarded to Rourke and Letts.*

OCD approved flashlight regulations stipulate careful shielding of the light from a flashlight during a blackout, as Arthur Letts did. Likewise wartime economy demands strict conservation of both flashlights and batteries.

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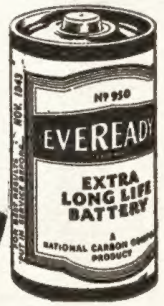

THE JULY ISSUE WILL BE OUT JUNE 9TH

Adventure

(Registered U. S. Patent Office)

Vol. 109, No. 2 for June, 1943 Best of New Stories

Six Weeks South of Texas (1st part of 3) . . . . . LESLIE T. WHITE 8
When Randy Dent started to herd those seven blooded bulls from the Panhandle to Brazil's Mato Grosso he guessed he might meet trouble before the long trek was over. What he didn't reckon on was a reincarnation of the Lone Star State's palmiest days of range war and six-gun law, deep in the heart of the South American hinterland.

Give a Dog a Name . . . . . ARTHUR HAWTHORNE CARHART 39
You can't explain to a dog how the Law works. Not when you don't quite understand it sometimes, yourself. For statutes in books are a heap different from the law of the wilderness.

The Phantom Caravel (a novelette) . . . . . R. A. EMBERG 48
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The Second Trap . . . . . GENE HENRY 82
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Grandfather's Secret Weapon . COMMANDER GEOFFREY LOWIS, AFC, RN 88
Now I know what a producer feels at a first night, thought Commander Bent when the torpedo struck. He couldn't know, naturally, that his young sub-lieutenant had arranged the performance to be a smash hit in more ways than one with the help of his dead gaffer and a drugstore clock.

Fighting Cadetship of the Confederacy (a fact story) . . H. G. RUSSELL 94
The navy of Dixie was not only original but distinctive. It gave the world the submarine and the armored warship and its gray-clad middies turned from calculus to cutlasses with equal facility.

The Devil Spider . . . . . FRANCIS GOTT 102
Men feared Mike Dunning. Hard, he was, with that hairy spider look about him, infecting us all with the hate he nursed. Then one night his own fear cracked the veneer and we saw the man for the first time.

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Cover painted for Adventure by Rafael De Soto *Kenneth S. White, Editor*

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ASK ADVENTURE

Information you can't get elsewhere

FOR tight fly lines the next time you go fishing.

Request:—The finish on all my fly lines is very bad. Can you tell me the materials to obtain and the method to use for refinishing?

—J. F. Sepes
808 S. Fess Ave.,
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Reply by John Alden Knight:—The first thing to do is to rub the lines down with pumice or rottenstone to remove all rough spots. Then make a 50-50 mixture of linseed oil and any good spar varnish. Put the mixture in a shallow dish and apply it to the line with the fingers, making sure that the coat is a liberal one. As the line is coated, coil it loosely on an open newspaper on the floor beside you. When dry, apply another coat and keep on adding coats until the fabric is well covered. After the last coat has been put on, allow the line to dry in a cool, dry place for from two weeks to a month. Then polish with rottenstone and you will have a new finish that will last for a surprisingly long time.

A PLYWOOD pirogue for use on northern lakes.

Request:—I am planning on building a plywood pirogue for use on the lakes in Northern Minnesota, and desire information regarding design and construction.

What I have in mind is a boat that will accommodate two or three men on a trip of a week to ten days, and that will be light enough to portage. In other words, that will take the place of a canoe. I have built several flat-bottom plywood boats and used them in these waters, but they were all too heavy and too wide for ready portaging. The best one so far is 12 ft. long, maximum beam 46 in., maximum width on bottom 36 in., with a flat transom 30 in. wide at the bottom and 33 in. at the top with 25° rake. The sides are 19 in. at the bow and 16 in. at the stern. The bottom is ⅜ in. fir plywood and the sides ¼ in. and the chines, wales, ribs, and transom white oak. The weight runs about 140 lb. This boat has moderate rocker and is an excellent row boat and does very well with a small outboard motor.

What I want now is something narrower and of a shape that can be paddled and also be driven by a 2½ hp. heavy duty outboard motor I have which weighs about 35 lbs. I have available ¼ in. plywood up to 16 ft. long, also white pine, clear and straight up to 16 ft. long, also Sitka spruce for ribs, thwarts and transom. The principal questions I have regarding this design are as follows:

What would be the proper length?

Should rocker be eliminated and the bottom made straight?

What should the maximum beam be and should the bottom be narrow with sharp flare to the sides or should the bottom be nearly as wide as the topsides?

Should both ends be pointed and both fore and aft sections the same or should there be a transom and should the sections be wider aft?

What should be the height of the sides?

Should there be an outside keel and what size?

What should be the arrangement of thwarts?

What rake should the stem have and if fitted with transom what should this rake be?

(Continued on page 124)

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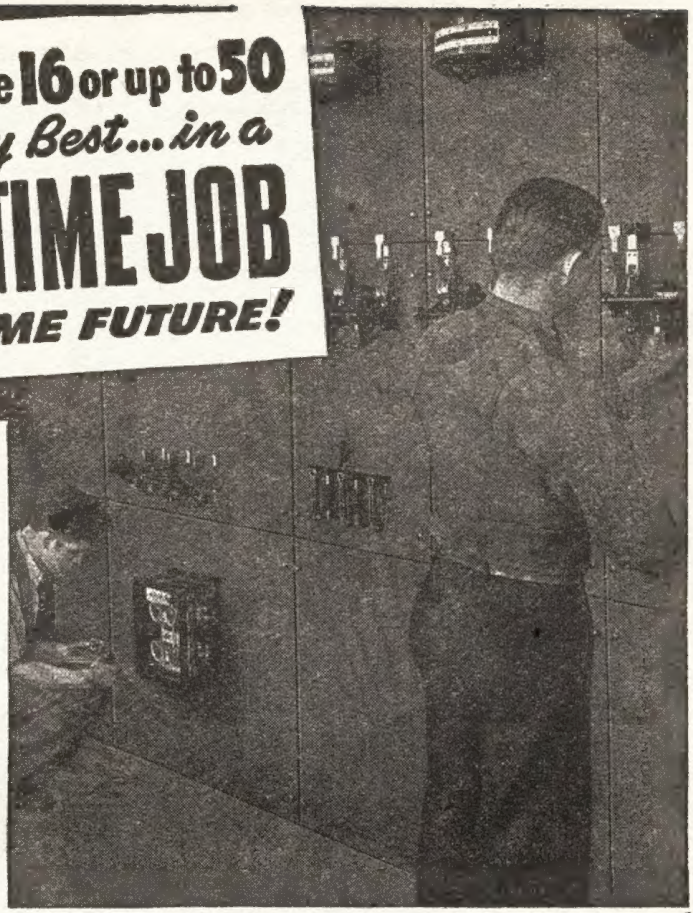

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It was as hopeless as trying to stop a swollen river with a spade . . . .

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES DYE

SIX WEEKS SOUTH OF TEXAS

By LESLIE T. WHITE

WELL, this was it! End of more than five thousand miles of wearying, worrying travel, and even the torrential downpour couldn't dampen Randy Dent's delight. *Rolling Down to Rio* makes a nice song, but it's no honeymoon when you're chaperoning seven prize Hereford bulls. And everything had rolled. Not only the wallowing old freighter, but the railroad

. . . . *The whole bawling, brawling torrent of beef swept into the jungle.*

tracks, even the landscape. Randy grinned cheerfully. Perhaps he had developed a permanent sailor's gait. That would be a swell thing for a Texas cowhand.

He hunched in the lee of the cattle-car abandoned on the siding and watched the train rumble drunkenly along the narrow-gauge track. Despite the fact that he was standing for the first time something over a thousand miles in the interior of Brazil's vast Mato Grosso, Dent had the feeling that he had been through this experience before. It was probably those funny little old-fashioned red cars, he thought, with the yellow-trimmed windows and the wood-burning locomotive that vomited a continuous shower of sparks, like a Roman candle. His grandfather had migrated to Texas behind an engine like that more than seventy years ago.

When the last coach had been swallowed by jungle, Randy shook the rain off his Stetson and turned back to his charges. He checked the door to make sure it was securely locked, spoke softly to the bulls to quiet them, and walked

the ties back to the mud hut that passed for a station here at Boa Vista.

He was a little surprised that Pedro Barbosa hadn't been standing right there when the train came in. If Randy had a cargo of prize yearlings coming from another country, he would have been on the spot when they arrived, rain, shine, or high water. But maybe a rancher who could afford twenty-five thousand dollars to improve his herd could afford to be indifferent. Randy wouldn't know about that.

The station agent was just locking up. There wouldn't be another train for a week, so his work was not heavy. He seemed startled when Dent's tall figure loomed out of the rain.

"Say, where can I find Pedro Barbosa?" Randy asked.

The agent acted more startled than ever. "You know—Barbosa," Randy repeated slowly. "Pedro Barbosa."

The agent put the key in his pocket, shook the door, and picked up his lantern. He gave the Texan a quizzical glance, then turned on his heel and walked hurriedly away.

"Well, I'll be a monkey's uncle!" Randy blurted. "What's wrong with that guy?"

It was getting dark fast, so Randy tightened his yellow slicker around his throat and waded in mud to his boot-tops toward the little town. He found a small general store and asked the man behind the counter if he knew Pedro Barbosa. The man blinked, formed the name with soundless lips, then shook his head vigorously. Too vigorously, Randy thought. He repeated the question in Spanish, but the shopkeeper continued to wag his head and moved to the other end of the counter.

Randy mopped his face and turned slowly to the doorway. Funny, that. He was sure they understood him. The name would sound the same in Portuguese as it would in Spanish or English. A nervous ache began to gnaw at his stomach. Suppose his telegram had gone astray and Barbosa didn't know he was coming? He couldn't keep those bulls penned up in a metal-roofed cattle-car another full day.

The only other store that was open was a small harness shop. Dent reasoned that a harness-maker would know all the ranchers, so he tramped inside and put the question to the wizened little gnome lacing a saddle. The man looked Randy over carefully, then lowered his eyes to his work. Randy repeated his question twice, but he might as well have been calling from Texas for all the attention he got. He went out into the rain again, considerably chastened.

He stood a moment, uncertain, while the rain funneled off his wide hat brim. He was about to continue his search, when he glimpsed a beam of light playing over the cattle-car. At first he thought it was his imagination. He waited, then he saw it again. The half-smile faded from his mouth. He patted his side to make sure his revolver was in the holster, took out his own torch, and headed across the tracks on the run.

THERE had been scant twilight; darkness followed the flames of sunset, as a shade drawn across the heavens. It was a clammy blackness made more savage by the rain. Randy slipped and stumbled along the right-of-way, keeping the lonely cattle-car between the bearer of the light and himself. The long probing fingers of the beam reached through the slatted sides of the car.

He moved cautiously as he reached the tracks, and took out his revolver. His smile returned but it was a little warped. He eased his thumb onto the button of his torch and inched along the car until he could distinguish the figure behind the beam. Then he flipped on his light and stepped into the open.

"Don't move!" he growled. "What's the . . . Holy smoke!"

The girl had fallen against the car in fright, and the circle of light seemed to pin her there. Her flash had fallen in the mud, and one hand was raised as if to ward off a blow. Her dark eyes were so wide and startled that Randy chuckled in spite of himself.

"Take it easy!" he told her. "I won't bite."

His humor brought the blood rushing into her cheeks. The fear went out of her eyes, and they began to snap with anger.

"How dare you!" she cried, in English. "Take that light off me!"

"How dare *I*? Say, just what are you snooping around my bulls for?" He turned the beam out of her eyes, but kept it close enough to watch her.

She was tiny anyway, and the too-big raincoat made her look like a child—a kid caught stealing jam — Randy thought. She was mad, too. She straightened, adjusted her wide hat that had fallen askew, and looked up at him quickly.

"Then you own these bulls?"

"Why?"

She colored a little. "I would like to know the price," she said stiffly.

Dent grinned. "Plenty. More than you ever thought of."

"You are very rude!"

Randy decided she looked real cute when she was riled. "How does twenty-five thousand bucks American sound to you!"

That staggered her. "Who on earth could pay that ridiculous price?" she gasped.

"Well, a guy named Pedro Barbosa for one." Randy grinned.

She gave him a quick glance, then that strange, veiled look he had noticed on all the others came over her face.

"Oh!" she said.

Randy had forgotten his nervous ache, but now it came back with a wrench.

"Look," he said impulsively. "What's wrong here?"

"I don't understand you."

But he knew she did. "I've brought these bulls all the way from Texas to deliver to this Barbosa," he told her earnestly. "He was supposed to meet me and take them off my hands. If you've got any idea where he is, I'd be obliged to know."

She looked at the gun dangling in his hand, then stooped and picked up her flashlight.

It was a long moment before she said quietly: "I suggest that you inquire at the saloon."

He turned to look in the direction she had indicated, and when he swung back she was running down the tracks. He shrugged and started back toward the town.

THERE was a gramophone wailing plaintively at the far end of the solitary street, and as Randy trudged closer, he could see saddle horses tied to the hitching-rail before an open doorway. It was a small place with a blue-tiled floor and a half-dozen iron-legged marble-topped tables. Four men were playing cards at one table, while a fifth stood behind, kibitzing. A short bar shared the rear wall with a closed door. A tired-looking woman with damp, stringy hair leaned on the counter beside the old-fashioned gramophone.

Randy smiled, slapped his hat against his leg to shake the water off, and unbuttoned his slicker. "Hello!" he said. "Do you speak English?"

The woman stared at him, and shook her head.

"I was afraid of that," he chuckled. He tried again in Spanish, and got only a shrug. He took a slip of paper out of his pocket with a name written on it and handed it to her.

"You . . savvy . . Pedro Barbosa?"

She regarded the paper gravely, then waddled around the counter to the table. All the card-players read it. They shared a common lack of expression, yet Randy sensed a certain resignation, as if they expected something unpleasantly inevitable. One of the men seized the paper, jumped up, and ran out into the rain.

Randy tried to intercept him, but the woman blocked his way. She was such a funny, dumpy little frump that Randy had to smile. She ducked behind the bar and set up a bottle and a glass.

The colorless liquor tasted like acid, but Randy's clothes were so wet he was chilled, and the stuff warmed him. He had a hunch he was getting a touch of fever, and he was glad his job was almost done. He wished ardently for a clean, cool drink of plain water, but he had been specifically warned against the water here in the Brazilian wilderness. It could be much more lethal than any liquor.

He was leaning his elbows on the bar when behind him he heard the clank of a spur without the sound of a boot which should normally accompany it. He jerked around, letting his hand drop to

his gun. He stopped there. After his long trip Randy had figured he had used up his supply of surprises, but now he realized how wrong he was.

The native who had run off with the note was back with another man, and from the respect shown by the others in the place, he was a personage of some kind. He was built along the lines of a beer-keg, and on his huge, melon head he wore a childish straw hat with an upturned brim and a black cord tied beneath one of his several chins. From the shadows of his craggy brows, one good eye appraised the Texan with amused interest, while the other, screened by a milky film, gazed off absently at an oblique angle. He wore a faded blue shirt, with a scarlet poncho draped over his left shoulder. Instead of pants, he wore a *chirpa*, a massive diaper-like cloth around his loins. His legs were hairy spindles, grooved by muscles, and to his bare feet were strapped a pair of spurs with three-inch rowels. The rowels were inlaid with silver that give them a sweet, musical ring. The only real thing about him was the well-kept Smith and Wesson revolver swung from his cartridge belt.

"*Falla o Senhor portuguez?*" asked the fat man.

Randy shook his head. "I'm an American." He repeated it in Spanish.

The fat man jiggled with laughter. "*Bom!* Good! Myself I speak leetle English." He held out the paper Randy had given the woman. "Thees one, thees Barbosa—perhaps he is your friend?"

"That," he said, "is Pedro Barbosa. No longer is he interest in the bulls."

Randy felt the tension build up. He glanced at the woman. She was watching his face. The fat man still grinned, but the grin was cold. Randy felt the chill coming back again.

"Barbosa is no friend," he said cautiously. "He was supposed to meet me here. I've brought him some cattle from Texas."

The fat man found that very funny. He gurgled with laughter and slapped

his bare leg. But Randy noticed that no one else in the place even smiled. His face reddened.

"If you know where Pedro Barbosa is," he said quietly, "I'll be obliged if you'll take me to him."

"And why not?" The newcomer spoke in rapid Portuguese to the woman. She seemed to protest but, with a final shrug, opened the door leading out back.

The fat man swept off his hat. "If the *senhor* please?"

Randy hesitated, then followed the woman down the corridor. The spurs tinkled behind him, ghostly bells. He had a sinking premonition of trouble, and fever or weariness wrung more sweat out of him. The woman took a kerosene lantern off a peg on the wall and unlocked a small side door. She made the sign of the cross before she entered the room. Holding the lantern high, she stepped aside so the rays could reach the body stretched flat on the floor. Randy felt the hair rise on his nape.

The man was irrevocably dead. Randy counted four bullet holes before he turned away and looked at the fat man.

The latter grinned complacently as he leaned against the wall scratching one instep with the toe of his other foot.

"That," he said, nodding at the dead man, "is Pedro Barbosa. No longer is he interest in the bulls."

RANDY couldn't speak. For the first time in his life, he was completely nonplused. He had the crazy impulse to yell that it was a lie! But intuitively he knew it was the truth—that the man on the floor, was, or had been Pedro Barbosa. *No longer is he interest in the bulls,* the fat man had said. Upset as he was to see a stranger stretched in death, the full realization of his own predicament slowly dawned on Dent.

It was hard to think. For six long weeks Randy had been travelling with his precious cargo, looking forward to this day when he should meet Pedro Barbosa and deliver the blooded yearlings. And now . . . *No longer is he interest in the bulls!*

It was not just another ordinary sale. Barbosa had offered twenty-five thousand in American money for the yearlings in good condition, cash on delivery. To Jim Hanley, the owner of the bulls, twenty thousand of that meant the saving of his own ranch in Texas. The other five thousand was to be Randy's share. It was to be the stake on which he planned to hang his future. Rolling down to Rio, he had built himself a dream house of cards. Now he found Barbosa . . . no longer interested in bulls!

He tried to read something on the fat man's face, but the milky eye disconcerted him. The woman had let the lantern sag to her side. He could see how anxious she was to escape the room, so he nodded and went out after her. The fat man locked the door.

They walked back into the bar, and Randy leaned on the counter, debating his next move, for he sensed that his future depended largely on what he said or did in these next few minutes.

They were all watching him, waiting. Randy knew he could lose nothing by their appraisal. In his high-heeled Texas boots he stood nearly a head taller than the biggest of them, and his hard, whipcord leanness exuded an aura of power he took no pains to conceal. He had crammed a lot of living into his twenty-six years.

"What happened to Barbosa?" he asked at last. "Who shot him?"

The fat man shrugged and spread his hands. "Who can say?"

Randy had lived along the Mexican border long enough to understand the Latin temperament, and to know his own limitations in prying into their affairs. One wrongly phrased question, one ill-considered comment, and they would duck behind the barrier of language, and he would be even worse off than he was now.

"Tell me," he asked. "Is there anyone else here from his *fazenda*? His wife, perhaps?"

The fat man conferred with the woman before he answered.

"Barbosa, he come alone. He 'ave no family."

Randy concealed his disappointment. Jim Hanley had given him a crude map of the country, enough to show that Bar-

"I, Manoel José Antonio Diniz Felippe Carlos Sebastiao Francisco Silva, am at your service, senhor."

bosa's great ranch lay in Paradise Valley, nearly a hundred and fifty miles south of Boa Vista through a wilderness of jungle and *campo*. Dent was holding a bear by the tail; he couldn't hang on and he couldn't let go. He didn't have enough money left to take the bulls back to Texas, even if they could stand the trip, and he couldn't cable Hanley for any more. One thing was sure, however—the bulls couldn't spend a day cooped up in the broiling sun under a corrugated iron roof.

"Who is running the ranch?" he asked.

"One Bento Hermanny," said the fat man. "He is Barbosa's *capitaz*, w'at you call foreman, no?"

"Is there any way to get in touch with him?"

"Only the mail, *senhor*. Sometime she go every week."

That was probably the truth, Randy thought grimly. He wished he could find what had happened to Barbosa, and why. Probably it had nothing to do with the arrival of the bulls, and was therefore none of his business. But suppose it had something to do with the bulls? Twenty-five thousand dollars was a lot of money anywhere; here in the Brazilian hinterland it was a fortune. Hanley had warned Randy against taking chances, against sticking his nose into trouble. But if this wasn't trouble, Randy had never heard the word.

Into his mind flashed a memory of the girl he had found looking into the car. Obviously she had known that Barbosa was dead. He wished he could find her now. He didn't trust this fat, one-eyed scoundrel. But the bar was the only place open in Boa Vista at this time of night, and it was unlikely he could find anyone else who could understand English. He suspected that most of these people could speak Spanish if they wanted to, because they were close enough to the Paraguayan border, but they chose to speak only Portuguese, which was their native tongue.

Randy decided to gamble all or nothing. "Ask her," he directed the fat man, "if she knows anyone I can hire to help me take the bulls to Barbosa's ranch."

The query when repeated brought a torrent from the woman. The fat man quivered with laughter.

"She speak loosely of bandits," he told the Texan, "and for that reason she know only wan man who 'as the courage. For the rest—bah! They 'ave the livers of leetle chickens."

"Where'll I find this man?"

The fat man took off his hat and bowed. "I, Manoel José Antonio Diniz Felippe Carlos Sebastião Francisco Silva," he announced. "I am at your service, *senhor*."

"Are you listing a regiment, or is all that just you?"

The other bowed again. "I alone am sufficient, *senhor, Gracas a Deus!* Thanks be to God!"

RANDY bit his lip, and reexamined the fat man. Obviously he wasn't the clown he at first appeared for, despite his effervescent personality, he had a cold hardness about him. Randy hated to deal with a man he distrusted, but he saw no way out.

"O.K.," he said after a pause. "I'll give you fifty dollars American to help me get those bulls down to the ranch."

Manoel puckered his lips in a soundless whistle. "Feefty dollar! One *conto!*"

"Isn't that enough?" Randy growled.

"*Sim, sim!* To be sure, *senhor!* It is wan lot of money. Here in Mato Grosso feefty American dollar will buy a small herd of bulls. Yours mus' be ver', ver' valuable, eh, *senhor?*"

Randy saw his mistake, but it was too

late to back down. "Can you dig up a couple of trucks?" he asked. "Barbosa must have made some arrangements."

"The road she are ver' bad after the rain," mused Manoel, "but I am not without influence, thanks be to God!"

Randy gave him further instructions, and Manoel agreed to have two trucks ready at the siding at daybreak, weather permitting. The fat man's complete self-confidence was astounding, and a trifle irritating. Randy expected him to demand his money in advance, and was braced to refuse. But Manoel made no further mention of money. Finally Randy began to button his slicker.

"I'll see you in the morning," he told Manoel.

"Where you sleep, *senhor?*"

"With the cattle." Randy was emphatic about that.

Manoel said: "Wan moment, *senhor!*" And disappeared into the back room. He returned a moment later with a hammock.

"Take thees, *amigo*. In Brazil it is not well to sleep upon the ground. The ants they might not find your hide untender!" He howled with laughter. Everyone else in the bar maintained the same stony silence, like painted figures on a backdrop.

Randy wrapped the hammock around his waist under the slicker. Manoel accompanied him to the door. The rain had ceased, but the darkness was like a great velvet hood.

"*Até logo, amigo!*"

Randy hesitated. He was tempted to ask Manoel about the girl, but finally decided against it. With a brief "Goodnight," he waded out into the street.

Each time he lifted his foot the suction of the mud made a queer *thucking* noise. He hugged the fringe of darkened buildings, using his flashlight little. He was relieved to find the car locked as he had left it and the yearlings secure. He swung the hammock between the car doors so they could not be opened without his knowledge, hung his soggy boots and hat from the rafters, and climbed in. His gun he thrust in the front of his shirt.

Stretched in darkness, he built himself a cigarette. He was not entirely satisfied

The Texan's hard, whipcord leanness exuded an aura of power.

with his decision to go on. He would have preferred to find out more about the shooting of Pedro Barbosa, and certainly to check up on the one-eyed Manoel. But that would necessitate an uncertain delay, and he might find himself embroiled in a feud not of his making. On the other hand—who was going to pay him for the bulls? Would Bento Hermanny, the foreman, have that authority? This last one hundred and fifty miles might be the worst of the trip. The Mato Grosso was a strange wild land, and it grew wilder near the border of Paraguay.

He wished Jim Hanley were here to advise him, or his father. In some ways this country was like the old Texas his father had been born in; wild and tough. Randy smiled in the darkness. Thinking of his father made him feel better. Jim had said he was a chip off the old block. Snatches of Hanley's last talk came back to him now.

"Randy—" he could remember the soft drawl—"you're a reckless, impetuous, fool kid, but I don't reckon it's all your fault. You take after your pa and your granddad. Neither of 'em'd ever run with the herd, an' by the time they got some sense, it was time to answer the last round-up. But they were men, Randy. They came to Texas when it was a brawly, sprawly land. Well, I'm sendin' you to that kind of place now. Folks hereabouts are goin' to say I'm crazy, but I don't need to tell you what the money means to me at this time, so I

know that you won't let me down."

Randy had given his promise, and he meant to keep it. The bulls stirred restlessly. He fished a battered harmonica out of his pocket and began to play softly. The rain had freshened the jungle, and now a vagrant breeze brought him the incense of the wild and all the mysterious fragrance of the great, moist forests. And because he was hungry for the cool dry air of the Texas plains the sweetness sickened him. Somewhere off in the distance, a *tigre* screamed. Randy let his arm dangle over the edge of the hammock. Fireflies zoomed above his head like tiny shooting stars. . . .

No longer is he interest in the bulls. . . .

CHAPTER II

ONLY DEATH CAN BE HURRIED

RANDY was jerked awake by a scream that seemed at once human, and yet was the most ghastly sound he had ever heard. For one lost instant he could not remember where he was. It was still dark. He moved, and the hammock brought reality; it reversed itself and dumped him face down on the floor of the car. The bulls stamped nervously. Then a man laughed, and Randy recognized Manoel's throaty voice.

"*Bom dia, senhor!*"

Randy groped for his boots. "Who in thunder screamed?"

"Scream, *senhor?*"

"Yes—*scream!* It sounded like a woman being strangled."

Manoel sighed noisily. "A woman! Ah, *senhor,* you make wan cruel jest! If a woman was near Manoel, she would not scream, of that I can assure. No, *senhor,* there is no one here but myself and two accursed *caboclos* with their stinking trucks. Maybe you hear the cry of bird I just now scare."

Randy grunted and pulled on his boots. Then he unlocked the car door and swung to the ground. Manoel pointed to a small fire burning across the tracks.

"Come," he suggested. "We have *almoco*—what you call the breakfas'."

There were two young natives huddled around the blaze who regarded Randy without interest. Manoel ignored them. He offered Randy a can of steaming black coffee and a dirty, sour bun. Randy was getting used to the Brazilian coffee by this time, and its unholy strength prodded him even wider awake.

The events of the previous evening came back to him, and it all seemed like a bad dream. Somehow he still couldn't believe that Barbosa was dead. Was he acting like an impetuous fool kid? Suppose he got the bulls down to the ranch and was unable to collect the money for them? The questions flashed through his mind like the spokes of a spun wheel, but always he argued that there was no alternative. He couldn't stay here and he couldn't go back. But he still wished he knew more about his one-eyed guide.

Manoel had added to his bizarre costume a flame-colored pajama-top over his blue shirt. He was hunkered down, not on his heels in the manner of a Texan, but as though he were seated on a very low stool. It was a neat problem in balance. Manoel resembled nothing quite so much as a very fat little toad. He was noisily sucking *yerba maté,* a bitter tea-like herb, from a silver-mounted gourd with a silver tube.

Daylight returned as swiftly as it had fled the night before. After *almoco* the two natives backed their trucks up to the cattle-car, and Randy noted with satisfaction that the trucks were American-made. Manoel perched himself on the top of one cab, like a grotesque gargoyle, and watched the lank Texan lead the yearlings into the trucks.

"Ver', ver' good!" he exclaimed with enthusiasm. "In all Mato Grosso I 'ave never seen such bulls, *senhor! Puxa!* Manoel he like to 'ave even wan bull like that!"

"They're Polled-Herefords."

"*Sim,* I know. They good fat, *senhor!* Like me, no? Beeg belly, short leg. Some people she say Manoel he 'ave horns, too. Ah, well, we 'ave our uses!" He rumbled with laughter and slapped his leg. "Thees country she need more bulls like that. Our native stock—bah! They are tough an' skinny like you, *senhor,* which is not wan fine figure for bull!"

Randy smiled wryly. He hoped Bento

Hermanny would think as highly of the bulls as this fat scoundrel. The girl kept popping into his mind. Cute youngster. He sighed. It was a cinch she couldn't pay twenty-five thousand for the lot.

While Manoel was talking, a half-dozen huge black vultures, the size of turkeys, flapped to a cautious landing on the roof of the cattle-car and watched the loading.

"*Urubus,*" explained the fat man, tipping his sightless eye in the direction of the birds. "They know the trucks from the slaughterhouse. They think we go there now, *senhor. Puxa!* Do they get fool'!"

I hope they do, Randy thought bitterly.

When the trucks were finally loaded, Manoel suggested that he ride in one, and Randy in the other, but Randy insisted they ride the same cab. Manoel took no offense. He kept chuckling to himself until it began to grate on Randy's nerves. It seemed that there must be some huge joke from which he was excluded.

IN the daylight Boa Vista was picturesque, yet it fitted into the pattern of all the interior towns Randy had observed from the train. A few single-story adobe buildings, tinted in pastel blues and pinks and yellows, formed around a large grassy *praça,* or square. There a few scrawny milch cows roamed at will and dogs barked in the sun.

Randy had a sinking sensation as the village fell behind, and the road, such as it was, stretched in a straight line due south over the gently rolling landscape. He was jumping off into the unknown. But Randy wasn't much of a worrier, and the country claimed his interest. He was startled by the brilliance, for his color sense had been conditioned by the subdued tones of his native state. Here in the Mato Grosso, color was exaggerated. The road was incredibly red, as if it were bleeding softly, and in the bowl of blue sky, stationary cumulus clouds hung like bunches of bleached cotton. But it was the endless prairie, or *campo,* that fascinated him. Here was enough

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"Tell me," he asked, "do you ever have snow here?"

Manoel shook his head. "Snow? Ah, I 'ave 'eard of it. No, *senhor,* we 'ave no snow. But of rain we 'ave much. From May to October is nice winter, with enough rain to keep air clean and grass green. Then 'bout November the summer rain she start an' keep up until January, when for two weeks the sun shine like holiday. This we call *January summer.* After that the rain she get mad. The rivers flood, the *pantanal,* w'at you call swampland, go under the water, an' everyt'ing all time drip, drip, drip. Ah, it is too much, *senhor!*"

Randy watched a flock of emus, the great South American ostrich, cross the road and gallop into the *campo.* "Man, if we had feed like that in Texas—whew! What we'd do with it!"

"I 'ave one day count up to eighteen different kind of grass," Manoel said gently. "But the *senhor* forget one t'ing. Where good t'ing grow easy, so easy grow the bad. Too much grow here, *amigo,* an' the jungle she is one tireless enemy. This road, now, which our soldiers *machette* through the *mato,* w'at you call jungle. If they pause for few week, the jungle she grow right back again. It is always a fight. An' many young men she die, for we 'ave not found way to stop all disease, nor kill the snakes which 'ave not the politeness to rattle, as in your great land to the north, *senhor.*"

Randy took another look at him. Manoel grinned back.

"You *Norte Americanos* do not always think out such things, *amigo.*"

"We haven't had to," Randy said thoughtfully.

A dozen small green parrots flashed screaming past the cab. Randy had the impression of all this color beating on his senses. The day was hot and sticky, but not nearly as humid as it had been along the coast, or at Rio.

They passed scattered herds of cattle wading in the deep grass, and most of them were rangy brutes with long horns, like the Texas longhorns of his grandfather's day. Randy felt that somehow he had dropped back through time and that perhaps he was living over the life of another generation. The sensation pleased him, for he had always admired his grandfather's quiet, sure courage. . . .

Manoel jerked him back to the present. "Those dog-bellied cows we call *Creola,*" the fat man remarked. "They are native to Mato Grosso an' descend from early cattle brought over many hundred years ago by the Portuguese. Bah! They are fit only for *urubu* feed. Those hump-backs"—he pointed out a few Brahman bulls mixed among the scrubs—"we name *Zebus.* They come from India to make fat our herds. They are tough an' stand well this climate, but they are mean-tempered beasts."

He produced a long, black cigar from the crown of his hat and lighted it. "Tell me, *senhor,*" he asked, jerking his head toward the body of the truck. "Have you many such ver' good bulls like those in North America?"

Randy laughed. "Heck, yes! Plenty of 'em! You can't find a better machine for turning grass into beef than those old white-faced Herefords. When my granddaddy first went to Texas more than seventy years ago we used to have a longhorn handed down to us from those same *conquistadores* which brought your *Creola,* from Europe, but later we began experimenting around. Now the Herefords stretch from Maine to California and there are no longhorns left."

Manoel nodded moodily. "This land of ours is ver' old, yet it is so young. Now she start to grow, an' some day come when this *campo* will be full of cattle like you 'ave here in thees truck. Then nobody go 'ungry, no need for bandits, for soldiers, for want. Right now this Mato Grosso she is like your Texas maybe seventy-five years ago."

Randy felt a little chill play up his spine. He had never met anyone like this fat man who had a trick of framing in words the very thing Randy was

thinking. Then suddenly it came to him what he had heard about this queer diaper Manoel was wearing. It was the costume of the Paraguayan *vaqueiro,* or cowboy. Suppose Manoel was leading him to a border rendezvous? He shrugged and rolled himself a smoke. Trouble, if it happened, would probably come when they reached the frontier.

THE heat grew worse as the sun neared its zenith, and the trucks churned up a mist of fine red dust. After a time they rolled out of the *campo* into *mato,* the forest from which the sprawling state of Mato Grosso, or Big Forest, derives its name. Randy whistled softly. Here was a fairyland. Tall trees in a race to reach the sun towered a hundred feet overhead, while vines and creepers and lianas interlaced into a solid screen that spread a welcome shadow across the narrow road. Here and there a slender shaft of sunlight reached through the net to help the tiny shoots of bamboo struggle upward. It reminded Randy of a vast, steaming hot-house. Orchids grew in profusion, and blue and white morning glories dangled above the road, like little bells. No two trees seemed alike; some were ugly and thick with thorns, others had foliage as fragile as old lace. The perfume was heady. Still moist with last night's rain, the forest glistened as though freshly lacquered.

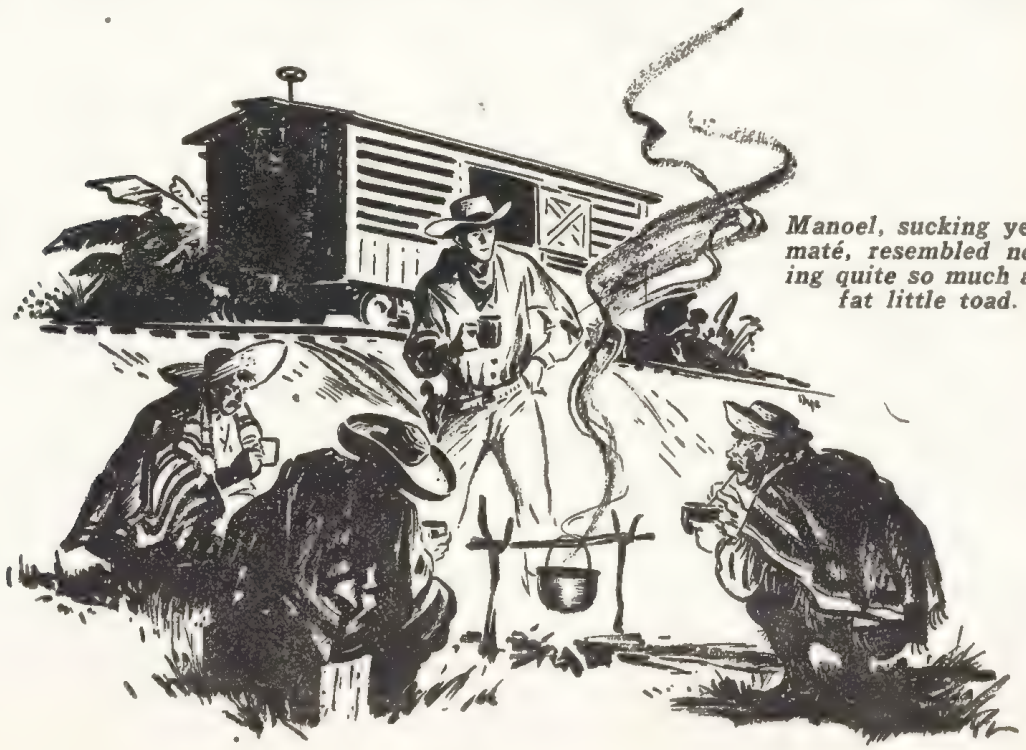
Strange animals flitted across the road like small, dark ghosts, and once Randy glimpsed a troupe of monkeys swinging off through the trees. Then as they reached the end of the *mato,* and the hot, open *campo* stretched ahead, a ponderous ant-eater waddled in front of the truck. The driver braked sharply and began to curse. Even Manoel was disturbed.

"What's the excitement?" Randy asked.

"*Puxa!* It is a sign of much bad luck, *senhor!*"

Randy laughed at him. Manoel unholstered his gun and noisily kissed the barrel. "No matter," he said, smiling. "There ver' leetle bad luck my sweet Julia she cannot feex for me." He lovingly put away the gun, but he was quiet for a long time.

They made nearly eighty miles by midday and when, shortly after, they pulled up by a small store on the side of the road, Randy had cause to recall the ill-omen of the ant-eater. They had entered the dark coolness of a building, only to find it apparently deserted.



Manoel, sucking yerba *maté, resembled nothing quite so much as a fat little toad.*

Manoel banged on the counter with his fist, shouting: "*O de casa!* Oh the house!" Randy was standing just inside the door.

Suddenly he had the uncomfortable feeling that he was being watched. He glanced upward. In a half-loft, deep in the shadow, a man lay sighting them between the twin barrels of a shotgun. Without taking his eyes off the man, Randy eased his right hand close to the butt of his revolver. Then in a conversational aside, he said to Manoel: "Take it easy! There's an *hombre* covering us from above with a shotgun."

Manoel looked up, and swelled like a toad. He finally talked the shopkeeper into coming down. The man was badly scared, but after fortifying himself with a drink, he went to the door and called his wife and five children out of the brush, where they had been hiding. Then he launched into a voluble explanation of his behavior. Manoel listend boredly, but Randy saw the dark faces of the two drivers begin to pale.

When the yarn was concluded, Manoel turned to the Texan. "Thees crazy *caboclo* tell wan beeg story about bandit on the road. Bah! Thees people she are all coward."

The truck drivers exchanged nervous glances. The shopkeeper stood with his mouth slack. He was shaking. His wife, a thin, negroid type, peered around the edge of the door, poised for flight. She was holding an infant high on her bony shoulder while the others clung to her shapeless cotton dress.

These poor devils are really afraid, Randy reflected. He tried not to think of his own predicament.

"Come on," he urged Manoel. "Let's get out of here."

The drivers would not budge. Manoel argued until his patience snapped, then he floored one of the men with a terrific blow on the jaw. While the other driver fled bleating into the brush, Manoel pounced on his victim and laid the point of a knife to his throat.

Randy grabbed him. "Cut it out!" he growled. "I don't want a run-in with the police."

The fat man was reluctant to leave a job half done. He raked the driver with his spurs as he sprang to his feet. The man left the ground like a scalded cat and vanished into the *mato.* Manoel stared after him, moodily picking his teeth with the knife. "I am disgust!" he grumbled.

"Look here," Randy asked. "What about this bandit? I don't want to lose these bulls!"

Manoel spat in contempt. "*Ola!* Did not I, Manoel José Antonio Diniz Felippe Carlos Sebastião Francisco Silva promise to take you to the *fazenda* of Barbosa?" He grinned abruptly. "Poof! I know thees bandit, *senhor.* He ver' much afraid of me."

Randy turned on his heel and walked out to the trucks. The drivers had taken the ignition keys. Manoel came out and they talked it over. Randy was determined to go on. There was a slim chance that Barbosa might have left some arrangement for the payment of the bulls. It was the only gamble. They were still about sixty miles from the *fazenda,* but Manoel intimated that there was a short cut by which they could save forty miles —"If the *senhor* have the nerve?"

Randy scowled. "Where does the nerve come in?"

Manoel scratched his head with the knife blade. "We would 'avè to cross the land of Nestor Figuereido," he said. "Sometime he get mad queek. But I, Manoel, am of no fear."

Randy felt the excitement surge in him. "You seem to be the only one down here with any courage," he said dryly.

"Thanks be to God!" agreed Manoel, piously. "Fear come into the heart when confidence she vacate."

"We'll take a chance," Randy decided. "See if you can rustle up a couple of horses."

They never saw the truck drivers again. By the time Randy had worked the bulls to the ground, Manoel had bullied the shopkeeper out of two saddle horses.

It was slow, hot going. The yearlings were stiff and lazy after weeks of confinement, and they wanted to graze in the lush grass. The saddle was strange to Randy. It lacked a horn, being fashioned like a pack-saddle, loose covered with two sheepskins and a leather apron.

It was too soft and much too wide. The stirrups troubled Randy, for they were small and rounded at the bottom. It was not until he glanced back at Manoel that he realized they had been designed for bare feet. Manoel rode with only his big toes in the stirrups.

Randy began to live for the next brief patch of *mato* and its protection from the sun, but he soon found that the moist shadow had its own brand of misery for the trailing vines were alive with insects, and he was kept busy pulling ticks off his neck and arms.

"For Pete's sake!" he asked the fat man. "How much farther is this ranch?"

Manoel gave him a bland smile. " 'Ave patience, *senhor. Paciẽncia,* she is the mos' important word in all Brazil. Can you 'urry the moon in the sky, or the rain? Ah, *amigo,* death she is the only t'ing we can 'urry. *Paciẽncia,* I beg."

The Texan tightened his mouth.

CHAPTER III

A RIVER TO CROSS

THEY camped that night at a small, abandoned *fazenda,* hidden in a swale, well off the trail. There was a little daub-and-wattle house covered with morning glories built under the shade of a majestic ceiba tree. Behind it was a small pasture of rich grass, bisected by a stream, and fenced with split bamboo. Randy was conscious of an ineffable air of sadness about the place, as he swung his hammock, and he wondered why it was unoccupied.

As the sun dropped over the horizon, Manoel disappeared for a few minutes to return with a small, pig-like animal which he deftly skinned and roasted over an open fire. Randy sat on his saddle on the ground. He was very tired, and his clothes were sticky with sweat. The *campo* lay blue and seductive in the soft light.

After the meal, Randy fashioned himself a cigarette, and Manoel produced another long cigar. Darkness closed down, and like camp-followers came the mosquitoes. Manoel bestirred himself to throw an armful of damp grass on the dying fire and then settled himself luxuriously in the resultant smudge. Randy watched him thoughtfully, then told him about the girl he had caught looking at the bulls.

Manoel smoked in silence for a while. "Was she ver' small like a dove, with a star in each eye and hair like midnight?" he asked.

Randy said he guessed that would fit.

Manoel sighed. "I do not know her," he said at last.

Randy felt sure he lied. He sensed the fat man was playing some sort of a poker game. He wondered suddenly if it was Manoel who had killed Barbosa. The night seemed cold.

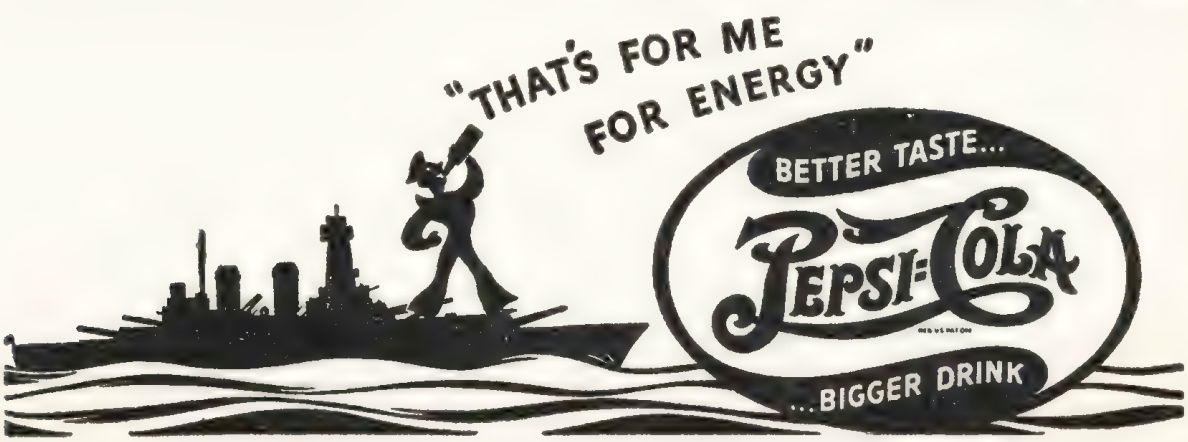
The little man sighed. "Ah, it is pleasant to lie here once again. Tell me, *amigo,*" he asked softly. "Does a woman wait you in this Texas?"

"No."

Manoel looked around. "No woman, *senhor?*"

"No woman."

Manoel sighed again and squashed an



offending insect against his leg. "That is too bad, *amigo.* Maybe we will. . . ." He paused, and Randy saw the glowing tip of his cigar wink in the darkness.

Randy stubbed out his cigarette and climbed into his hammock. He was too tired for worry. The girl *with a star in each eye and hair like midnight* drifted across his mind. He was smiling when the dulcet symphony of jungle insects lulled him to sleep.

THEY hit the trail as soon as it was light enough to travel. The country grew steadily wilder and a restless uneasiness settled on Randy. Manoel, too, was quiet and watchful. Randy tried to plan what he would do if trouble came, and each time they cut through the gloomy patches of *mato,* he rode with his right hand close to his revolver. Yet this day the gun failed to give him comfort, and he suffered from a sense of futility.

The yearlings were weary and stubborn, and they wanted to loiter in the forest shade. The ticks had feasted on their hides until they were bleeding. About mid-morning they came in sight of a small, sluggish river, and the bulls moved anxiously toward it. Randy let them go, but Manoel galloped up from the rear and drove them back.

"Stop there!" he roared angrily. "*Puxa, senhor!* Would you throw away our so valuable bulls? *Não, não!* Look—I show you somet'ing!" He herded the reluctant bulls well back from the water, then whipped out his revolver. A small alligator started to slither down the mud bank. Manoel spun it over with one shot, then heaving himself out of the saddle, he flung the still flopping 'gator into the river.

"*Ola!* Look now!"

The dying 'gator had barely sunk beneath the surface when the water began to seethe with life. In less than a minute, the creature was torn to pieces. As it disappeared, the river ran red with fresh blood for a moment, then that too was gone.

"That, *senhor,*" said Manoel grimly, "might 'ave been our seven bulls!"

Randy was shaken. "What are they?"

"*Piranhas, senhor,* a ver' bad feesh." He smiled suddenly. "Wan time I fight for general who give his men who are bad wan slight cut and march them into river. The general she say it teach them wan good lesson. They don't be bad no more." He chuckled. "That are a ver' true statement."

Randy frowned at his anxious yearlings. "How are we going to get them across, Manoel?"

The fat man bounced into his saddle. "The *senhor* will wait," he commanded. "I, Manoel, will come back." He touched spurs to his horse and vanished upriver.

He was back in a few minutes, towing a scrawny tick-covered old cow on the end of his rope.

"Where did you get that cow?" Randy demanded.

"I borrow her," Manoel said, grinning. "*Puxa!* She is sick. She 'ave no value, *senhor.*"

Randy didn't like it. "What's the idea? I thought you were going to find a way across this murderous river."

"*Paciẽncia!* Now if the *senhor* will lead wan bull across so the others she will follow queeck. I, Manoel, will say w'en to go. Understand?"

"But those fish, you darn fool!"

Manoel snorted. "I will take care of the feesh!" He dragged the cow about a hundred yards downstream and drove her into the river. She gave just one bleat of terror as the fish attacked her, then Manoel put her out of misery with two quick shots. As the fish boiled around her carcass, Manoel shouted: "*Ola!* Go now—fast!"

Randy hesitated, thinking of the risk, but when Manoel galloped up and spurred his horse into the water, Randy led the bulls after him. He hardly dared to breathe until the last white-face had safely struggled up the opposite bank. Only then did he look downstream. The river still teemed with *piranhas,* but the cow was gone.

He looked at the fat man. "Thank you, *amigo.*"

Manoel wiped the sweat off his face. "Some there are who say the *piranhas* mus' smell blood to attack, but sometime he attack anyhow. Ver' dangerous."

"Any more rivers like that to cross?"

The fat man shrugged. "Not unless we 'ave to go back over that one, *senhor*. It is the *Corrego do Boi Mocho*—the Creek of the Ox with the Cut Horns. We are now on *fazenda* of Nestor Figuereido, who is sometime ver' hot of head. Much time he mak' trouble."

"We're not going to hurt his land," Randy reasoned.

Manoel said nothing, and they moved up the slope. They topped a rise and passed down into a small basin where a ribbon of clean, fresh water glistened in the sun. A clump of *mato* to the west offered some shade, and a cooling breeze came from the south down a narrow pass between the gently rolling hills.

"This is a good place to rest," Randy suggested. "We should be nearly there, eh?"

"About one league more, *senhor*—about three an' wan half miles to Barbosa's *fazenda*." Manoel glanced sideways at the Texan. "Maybe we should go on now, *senhor?* I do not feel 'appy here."

Randy laughed. He slipped his rope off the lead bull and let the seven wander down to the stream. He kept to his saddle, well back up the slope, in case one of them should make a break for the river behind. Three miles to go, after five thousand, and the yearlings all fat and accounted for. He grinned at the fat man.

Manoel frowned and touched the coals of his cigar to a bloated tick buried in his furry forearm.

"I don't like it, *senhor*," he insisted.

"What about all this courage?" Randy jeered goodnaturedly. He thumbed back his hat, crossed one leg over his horse's neck, and started to roll a smoke.

The horse heard it first. Manoel cursed and started forward at a gallop. Randy had just time to fling his half-made cigarette aside and toe the stirrups when a hundred wild, longhorn cows stampeded out of the pass and plunged like a tidal wave across the basin.

He shouted an agonized warning and emptied his gun in the air to turn the leaders.

It was much like trying to stop a swollen river with a spade. He saw his prize Herefords start in terror as the flood of wild cattle closed around them. Then the whole bawling, brawling torrent of beef swept into the jungle. In a matter of minutes, all that remained of twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of bulls was the ominous crashing of heavy beasts in the *mato*.

He started to follow, then pirouetted his horse at the sound of a gun shot. Three men galloped out of the pass, firing at Manoel.

The fat man took time to scream: "Flee, *senhor!* Ride for your life!" Then he swung low on the far side of his saddle and streaked for the forest.

As Manoel vanished, the riders brought their sweating horses to a standstill and sat laughing. Then a girl rode over the hill toward them.

Randy knew then that the stampede had been deliberate. His bulls were gone. Within three miles of his destination, he was whipped. Anger sent the blood pounding to his head, blinding him. He pawed out his gun, remembered that it was empty, and holstered it again. Then he raked his horse's flanks, kicked his feet free of the stirrups, and headed for the group at a gallop.

THE three riders sat erect in their saddles, grouped in a small semi-circle by the stream and waited for the Texan in amused surprise. Randy focussed his whole attention on the tall, swarthy young man who was obviously the leader. The man was a little ahead of the others, and he seemed a part of the black gelding he forked with such easy arrogance. He was so sure of himself he didn't reach for his gun until it was too late. His horse wheeled to keep from being run down, and nearly unseated him. The Texan finished the job.

With the bulls gone, Randy was past caring about consequences. All the impetuous temper he had kept in check for weeks burst the dykes of restraint. He raked his terrified horse once more with the spurs, shook his feet clear of the stirrups, and vaulted from his saddle as they collided. He half-pushed, half-butted the other man over the far side of the black gelding.

The Brazilian turned in the air like a

The swarthy, arrogant young man was obviously the leader.

cat. They landed fighting on their feet. The other riders ringed them in, uncertain, caught too in the dusty vortex of the Texan's attack. Randy was vaguely aware that he was making sobbing little noises in his throat as he sought to hammer into oblivion the dark face in front of him.

The tall man wrenched his gun free. Randy twisted sideways as it came up, and slapped the barrel aside as it went off. The circle of horses started back, and gave them more room. Randy caught the man's wrist, levered the gun-arm across his own, and when the gun fell, he kicked it away into the dust. He heard the cries of the riders and the high-pitched scream of a woman. But it seemed detached and unrelated. He clawed for the dark brown throat with his left hand, throwing short, vicious punches with his right. They sawed back and forth across the ground, and the red dust mounted in a fog. The savagery of Randy's assault forced the other to the ground, but he drove his foot into the Texan's stomach and kicked himself clear. He somersaulted backwards and landed on his feet. Then he went for the knife in the back of his belt.

Randy gave him no chance to clear it. He threw a long left punch that set the other back on his heels. The man's hands flew outward to save himself. Randy put his whole weight into a round-house right to the mid-section. The dark man snapped forward like a pair of shears. Randy kicked the knife into the creek and made a jump for the man squirming on the ground.

He knew the other riders had dismounted. They were beating him on the head and neck, yet he felt no pain. Only exultation. He shook them off like so many flies, and locked his fingers in the long, black hair of the other man, and pounded his head against the ground.

A loop dropped over Randy's head. He clung to his victim until the rope tightened around his neck. His wind was cut off. He was jerked into the air. He crashed and was dragged. He heard shouts and the beat of hooves. His face ploughed up earth. His eyes and mouth and nostrils filled. The beating started again. But it didn't hurt. The bulls were gone. His future gone. Damn them all! He kept fighting, flaying his fists in a blind circle in the hope somebody would come within range. But his breath was stopped, and colored lights exploded in front of his eyes.

Abruptly the rope slackened. Abruptly the beating ceased. For a moment he lay still, fighting now against a blackout —hearing voices, unable to see. The pain began to catch up with him. He forced himself to roll over. Water was flung on him. He pawed away the dirt from his face until he could see out of one eye. Then he propped himself on one elbow and cleared the other.

HE SAW the girl first because she was standing directly in front of him, holding the other end of the rope which hung loosely around his neck.

He blinked in amazement. There was no doubt about it—she was the girl he had surprised at the train! Yet she looked like a pocket edition of the dark man he had fought; she had the same thin, aristocratic features, the same brilliant black eyes and hair. *Small like a dove, with a star in each eye and hair like midnight!*

"Que bicho!" she cried at him, and turned on a torrent of Portuguese.

"Oh, so it's you again!" he growled, crawling to his knees. "What's the idea—stampeding my bulls?"

Her face was white with anger. "Get off our property!" she snapped in Eng-

lish. "*Vamoose,* before my brother kills you!"

Randy tested his legs and found they supported him. The man he had fought was washing his face in the creek. The other pair were now mounted, one with a carbine nestled in the crotch of his arm. So this was the Figuereido outfit.

"Your brother didn't do so well a minute ago," Randy reminded her. "I want my bulls."

Nestor Figuereido turned from the creek, and when he saw Randy on his feet, pulled his gun. But the girl stepped between them, shouting at her brother. They had a violent argument, and at last Figuereido reluctantly holstered his weapon.

"Now get on your horse and go!" she urged Randy. He could see she was afraid of a killing.

He shook his head. "Like hell! You can't hi-jack my bulls, sister! I'm not leaving without 'em!"

Her brother barked a question, and she turned and spoke to him in Portuguese. Randy caught Barbosa's name, and the words *Norte Americano,* and knew she was explaining who he was and what he was doing. The two riders laughed, but Figuereido began to shout angrily and wave his arms. She seemed to be protesting, then she shrugged and swung back to Randy.

"My brother does not want your bulls," she said coldly. "But you cannot cross our property. You will have to go back the way you came. My brother says our men will drive them across the river." She was still pale, but some of the anger had left her eyes.

Remembering the martyred cow which Manoel had sacrificed in the river to the *piranhas,* Randy's temper started to boil again. But he had learned his lesson. With a disarming shrug, he half turned, then before they could interfere, he grabbed the girl with his left hand and yanked her in front of him. In the same motion, he drew his gun and laid the muzzle against the little hollow between her shoulder blades.

"Tell your brother," he said grimly, "that I want my bulls—now!"

The men got excited, and for one bad moment, Randy thought that Figuereido was going to run amuck. He dragged the girl back two paces so that he could keep them well in front of him. She remained cool, and he couldn't help but admire her nerve. She spoke quietly while her brother paced nervously back and forth, cursing.

Small like a dove, a star in each eye and hair like midnight.

"Tell him that if even one of those bulls is injured, he'll pay for it," Randy ordered. "They are very tired so they won't have run far. Tell him to get busy!"

She passed that along. Nestor Figuereido hesitated, then with a nod swung into the saddle. He leaned down from the black gelding and shouted something at Randy. The Texan grinned maliciously and gave the girl a prod with the gun that made her flinch. An instant later the riders spurred their horses and swept fan-wise across the basin.

"So Bento Hermanny is importing North American gunmen to help with his dirty work," jeered the girl contemptuously.

Randy grunted and made her sit on the ground in front of him, close enough so that no one could pick him off with a rifle without risk to her.

"I don't know anything about Hermanny and care less," he growled. "When I dump these bulls, I'm going back home."

"You beast!" she flared. "For this thing you have done you will be very sorry!"

RANDY laughed and built himself a smoke. Anger made her pretty, he thought indifferently. She was wearing light-colored *bombachas*—the full-flowing pants of the Argentine and Brazilian *vaqueiro*—a wide, ornate leather belt bedecked with coins, and shiny black *botinas,* boots.

Above the waist, she wore a soft wool

"Do what you are told, Black Eyes! I don't trust any of you. Shut up and keep moving!"

sweater that was kind to her figure.

She asked suddenly. "Who was that fat pig with you?"

"A helper. Why?"

"Had he not one bad eye?"

"What difference does it make to you?"

She colored. "Because it proves that you lie! You are a cattle-thief! Oh, *sem vergonha!* You are without shame!"

He didn't argue the point for at that moment one of the Herefords broke the forest. He sprang to his feet, forced the girl to mount his horse, then swung up behind her. Moments later the rest of the yearlings waddled into the basin, and the riders bunched them together near the creek.

"Now let me go!" stormed the girl.

"Like hell!" Randy sneered. "Look—tell your precious brother and his henchmen to throw their guns and knives into a pile by the creek. After that, they're to drive my bulls to the Barbosa line." When he felt her stiffen in resistance, he prodded her with his gun muzzle. "Do what you're told, Black Eyes! I don't trust any of you."

Young Figuereido put up a bigger squawk about throwing his gun down than he did about riding after the bulls, but the Texan's grim attitude convinced him. As he unstrapped his cartridge belt and let it fall in the red dust, he shouted something at Randy. The American didn't get the words, but the music was clear enough. "Shut up and get moving!" Randy growled.

He kept his eyes on Figuereido, for if the latter spilled over, Randy knew he was done for. But he played his bluff through, and his own rage melted away when he saw the weary yearlings move quietly ahead of the riders.

They rode in silence. The girl sat very straight, trying to keep from contact with Randy. Once when the horse shied from a small armadillo, she was thrown violently against him, and he had to steady her with his arm. He didn't mind. Several times he glanced around, wondering what had happened to Manoel. Manoel and his vaunted courage! Randy laughed aloud. That fat, one-eyed little fraud!

"You will regret this," the girl promised grimly.

"For the moment it is very pleasant," Randy commented. "Now tell your stooges to slow down. My bulls are tired."

After a long time, they finally came to a smooth-wire fence. Young Figuereido glanced back at his sister, then at her nod, snarled something to his men. They in turn dismounted and began to take down a section of the fence. About the time they had it ready for the bulls to pass over, five riders galloped out of the bush from the other side.

They were a hard-looking lot. Four of them wore *chirpas*, the diaper-like garment Manoel had worn. The fifth was dressed somewhat better, in *bombachas* and boots.

"Here are your friends!" the girl announced acidly.

Figuereido called to the five in Portuguese. They were openly hostile, and their leader replied in Spanish. Randy spoke to them in that language and told them he had brought the bulls from the United States.

"But where is *Senhor* Barbosa?" demanded the leader.

"Barbosa is dead!" Randy told them. He didn't like the savage way they turned to Figuereido's riders, so he added quickly: "*Senhor* Barbosa was shot in Boa Vista by someone I do not know. Now take me to whoever is in charge and I will explain to that one."

The man in *bombachas* nodded grimly. "Bento Hermanny is now in charge," he said curtly, and gestured Randy across the line.

The girl glanced over her shoulder and looked into Randy's face.

"Are you quite through with me now?" she demanded stiffly.

"Almost," said the Texan. As she started to slide from the saddle, he caught her in his arms and kissed her hard on the mouth.

"That's for the rope-choking," he grinned, as she dropped to the ground.

Her scarlet face stared up into his. He braced himself, half expecting her to slap him with the quirt, but she held her eyes steady and gave him a look of contempt such as Randy Dent had never seen on a woman's face. He managed a warped smile and played his last card. Thumbing open the cylinder of his revolver, he let the empty shells spill on the ground before her. Then he deliberately reloaded.

She watched until he was finished, then swung on her heel, and walked quietly over to her brother. Young Figuereido's face was deathly pale, but he made no comment, and with tender dignity lifted her onto the saddle in front of him. He turned his horse, and the jeers of the Barbosa riders followed him across the line.

As Randy watched them go, he suddenly felt mean and ashamed. His coarse jest had not cheapened the girl; it had only cheapened himself, not only in her eyes, but in his own. The urge to ride after them and apologize was strong, but he put it down. The Figuereidos were thoroughbreds, and nothing he could say or do now could undo what he had already done. So he sat his horse and waited impatiently until the fence was repaired, then he followed the others up the winding trail to the house on the hill.

CHAPTER IV

THE BEAST OF THE SEVEN HEADS

THE ranch buildings were laid out on the same general pattern of the small Brazilian towns. The low, rambling adobes formed a quadrangle, facing into

a common square. All were neatly whitewashed except the owner's home which was lavishly faced with glazed tile. The whole place had an air of solidity and permanence. The hill stood well above the valley floor and a steady breeze kept the humid air in motion.

As Randy dismounted, a big man strode out of the house. He glanced at the bulls, at Randy, and at the leader of the men who had brought him there.

The latter did not dismount. "Our *senhor* is dead!" he said huskily, in Spanish. "This one from North America brings the word."

"Dead?" The big man swung on Randy. "My name is Hermanny," he said in stilted English. "I am *Senhor* Barbosa's partner. You will tell me what is this thing about death?"

Randy gave an inaudible sigh of relief. If Barbosa had a partner, he would probably get his money. The *vaqueiros* were already driving the bulls into a small corral near the saddle-house.

"Unfortunately, it is true," Randy said slowly. "I do not know who killed him, but when I went into the saloon, I found him dead. I am very sorry, and I did not know whether to bring the bulls on or not."

Hermanny nodded. "Yes," he said. "We must have the bulls." He turned and walked over to the corral. Randy followed, trying to measure the man.

Bento Hermanny was very tall, perhaps an inch above the Texan, but he had a slight stoop to his shoulders that brought his head well forward. His face was seamed, and it had that peculiar saffron tinge of the tropics. He had a leonine shock of iron-colored hair, turned white above the temples. In contrast to the local custom, he was clean shaven, and his features had a frozen stiffness, as if cast. Randy tried to read something in his eyes, but failed. It was like trying to look through a fine metallic screen. The eyes were clear, but inscrutable, and their color matched his hair. He wore an immaculate white sport shirt and a pair of gray-worsted *bombachas*.

And Hermanny knew cattle. He examined each yearling individually, checking off its points like a stock judge. He was frankly pleased with the bulls

Hermanny's features had a frozen stiffness, as if cast.

and their condition. Randy was faint with relief. He could hardly believe the torturous journey was over at long last, and that he had succeeded. Then Hermanny turned around quickly, as if he had remembered the death of Pedro Barbosa.

"How did you get down here alone?" he asked sharply.

As Randy explained, Hermanny's eyes shadowed. "One moment!" he grunted. "This thing is going too fast for me. Come into the house." He paused to give some instructions to the riders, then introduced their leader. His name was Eduardo Valez, and Hermanny explained that he was the *capitaz*, or foreman. Eduardo acknowledged the introduction with a nod, and followed his men. Hermanny took Randy into the house.

The house was formed around a *patio*, and it was cool and quiet there. Hermanny waved him into a chair and sent an Indian servant scurrying after drinks.

"Now," he said, "you have not told me all, *senhor*. If Barbosa was killed in Boa Vista two days past, how is it you have fresh blood on your face?"

RANDY detailed his experiences with the Figuereido outfit, his fight and his eventual success in getting the cattle to the property line. While he was talking,

the drinks came. He was grateful for that.

Hermanny sprawled in a chair, his booted legs thrust straight before him, his chin resting on his fists. There was a quizzical half-smile on his face.

When Randy had concluded, he said: "My men told me that you kissed the pretty Mariana Figuereido." When the color mounted the Texan's cheeks, Hermanny laughed aloud. "I have long wanted to do that myself to that pretty one," he admitted. "How I envy your courage, *meu amigo!*" He sobered at once. "Tell me, *senhor,* how did you get the bulls across the *Corrego do Boi Mocho?*"

Randy told him about Manoel. Hermanny's face turned dark and grim. As Randy concluded, the other leaned forward.

"*Amigo,*" he said harshly, "be careful! I am no fool. First you tell me someone unknown murders my friend Barbosa, and then you speak of a phantom who brings you down here." As Randy started to flare up, he waved him silent. "Hold, now! About this man again—this fat man with one eye. He was short. . . ?" He measured the height with his hand above the floor. "With one big head and many chins? So? Black brows like wire and given to foolish laughter?"

"That's him," Randy growled. "He was a clown, but without him I could not have got the bulls down here."

"Why do you say it like that?" asked the other man.

"Because everyone we met spoke of some vicious bandit. . . ."

"*O Bicho das Sete Cabecas*—the Beast of the Seven Heads," interposed Hermanny.

"That's the guy," Randy went on. "Everyone else was afraid of this bandit except Manoel. I'll admit he was just a bluff, for he took to the timber fast enough when the Figuereidos showed up. But he got me down here, and I still owe him fifty dollars."

Hermanny snorted. "The reason why this man was not afraid of the bandit is simple. He himself is the bandit—the *Bicho das Sete Cabecas!*"

"Manoel?"

"Precisely!" snapped Hermanny. "He is a *quatreiro* and a *contrabandisto*—a cattle-thief and a smuggler! This killer has his hide-out across the border in Paraguay, and he has terrorized the south Mato Grosso for months!"

Randy started to laugh, then paused as he recalled little incidents of his trip: the card-players and the woman in Boa Vista, the shopkeeper, the remark of the Figuereido girl. All these things began to form a picture—a blurred, but distinguishable image.

"But, hell—it just doesn't make sense!" he protested. "This Manoel knew the value of the bulls. He could have murdered me, or steered me wrong a dozen times. Why, I'd have lost them in the creek to those damn savage fish, but for him!"

Hermanny jumped to his feet and shouted for his *capitaz.* Eduardo Valez appeared magically, and Hermanny barked his orders in Spanish.

"Take half a dozen men and ride the line down to the river. The Beast came down with our bulls! Remember—there is a five thousand dollar reward for him. To it I will add another thousand for the murder of *Senhor* Barbosa! Now ride!"

When the *capitaz* had gone, Randy said: "I do not know that he killed *Senhor* Barbosa. Perhaps. . . ."

Hermanny scowled. "It is obvious! For years he has stolen our cattle and murdered our riders. He has long hated Pedro Barbosa. It was a fight to the death—and Barbosa is dead. But he will be revenged."

"Well," Randy mused doubtfully, "I don't understand why he brought me and my bulls down. . . ."

"Bah! It is the man's perverted sense of humor!" snorted Hermanny. "Even I cannot understand the bandits they breed in this country. In your America, a thief is a thief, but here he has the cunning of a devil and something else which makes these filthy peons love him. Oh, it is a crazy country!" He clapped his hands, and when the Indian appeared, spoke to him in dialect.

"You must be tired," Hermanny said then, turning back to Randy. "Go to sleep now, and tomorrow we will discuss business."

WORN though he was, Randy had a hard time getting to sleep. He still found it difficult to believe that the fat, good-natured Manoel was a notorious bandit, and yet the evidence was conclusive enough. And Bento Hermanny? Randy couldn't make up his mind about the man. Hermanny had taken the killing of his partner, Barbosa, very casually. But perhaps, Randy mused, in a wild primitive territory like the Mato Grosso, where death and life were always side by side, a man had to learn to accept the inevitable. He shrugged and turned on his side—and drifted off to sleep.

When he awoke in the morning, he found his own clothes had been taken away, and in their place was a clean outfit. Hermanny came in when Randy was dressing.

"These garments are better suited to this country," the *fazendeiro* explained, nodding at the costume. "Your short, high-heeled boots are for the dry lands. Now these"—he indicated a pair of low-heeled boots with accordion tops—"we leave down most of the time. But in wet weather, or when fording a river, we pull them up . . . so." He drew out the pleats in the boots until the tops came to his knees.

The *bombachas,* too, were cool and comfortable, but to Randy, used to snug Levis, the flowing, baggy trousers felt like a skirt. As he dressed, Hermanny sprawled in a chair and watched him with a strange intentness. They went in to breakfast, and again Hermanny studied Randy Dent in silent appraisal. When the meal was over, Hermanny pushed back his chair.

"Come," he said. "I should like to show you this *fazenda.*"

As they stood on the wide, covered veranda waiting for the horses, Randy looked over the layout. The big house faced into a quadrangle. The meat-house, the skin-room, and a small corral were directly at the other end. To the right were the saddle-room, the horse-stables, and the quarters of the headmen; the ordinary *vaqueiros* lived outside the quadrangle. The left side was taken up by the kitchen, the servants' quarters, and a chicken-house. All were uniformly clean and freshly whitewashed.

"By the way," remarked Randy. "Did your men catch up with Manoel?"

"Not yet," growled Hermanny, "but we will. He is a scourge, that one. It takes nearly half our riders just to guard against his raids. One day we will catch him, though. This country is big, yes, but the hand of every *fazendeiro* is against him. Only the low *caboclos* protect him."

"Why do they?"

"Bah! The Brazilian is a sentimental fool! This Manoel throws a little money into the filthy paws of the peasants, and for that they hide him and lie to my men. But we will stop that, too. We will stop it the way your great Texas cattlemen stopped that same sort of thing." He shook his head. "What I cannot understand is why the dirty thief helped you bring down my bulls!"

The horses were brought around at that moment, so Randy let the comment go by. Hermanny mounted a big bay, and Randy drew a white-faced roan.

They rode for hours over the land, over rolling *campo* where emus grazed among the cattle, through cool stretches of *mato* where monkeys dangled overhead and jeered at them. And when the sun was high, they climbed a small mesa. Hermanny turned the horses to graze, and the two of them sat down under a grove of *bocayuvas,* tall, willowy palms that rustled in the wind with a plaintive humming sound.

RANDY had never seen anything like it. For miles to the southward stretched a lush green carpet to the river's edge. *Pantanal,* Hermanny explained; land that is submerged during the rainy months and which, when the waters recede, gives the richest forage in the world. The silver ribbon in the distance was the Rio Apa, the boundary that separated Brazil from Paraguay, and known in this region as the Guarani Frontier. And far away, both east and west, were the faint blue ridges of mountains.

Hermanny swept his arm in an all-inclusive arc. "This is the Paradise Val-

ley, my friend! Some day tens of thousands of sons and daughters and grandchildren of those seven bulls which you brought down here will roam this land. Some day this will be the greatest ranch in the world. It will stretch there from the Ria Apa to the railroad, a full fifty leagues to the north.

"This Mato Grosso is in about the same condition your great Texas was after the Civil War. Mostly it is being settled by people from our Rio Grande do Sul, which is a modern, well-ordered section similar to your Iowa. These people are of two kinds—those who came out here because they cannot adjust themselves to progress, and those others, like myself, who have a vision of the future and who desire to grow with this new and primitive land." He glanced sharply at the American. "Do I make myself understood, *senhor?*"

Randy nodded. "I reckon folks are like that every place."

Hermanny grunted. "Always. And this dirty bandit Manoel belongs to the group of lazy, shiftless thieves who would rather steal than work. Pigs! Bah!"

Strange, thought Randy, that Manoel should also speak of a vision of the future; a vision that sounded vaguely familiar. What then was the quarrel? Was it in the materializing of these visions, or was it because these strong-willed men were inarticulate, and therefore unable to merge their thoughts. He shrugged. It was no business of his. When he glanced sideways at Hermanny, he found the man studying him with that same intensity he had noticed before.

"It's a great country," Randy commented. "But I'm anxious to be on my way home. Tomorrow, if possible."

The *fazendeiro* seemed taken aback for a moment, then shrugged. "It would be pleasant to have you visit us a while, but you know best. A girl, perhaps?"

Randy shook his head. "No girl. Only we've got a war on, and there's beef to raise."

Hermanny seemed about to say something, then changed his mind. "I will arrange for the money at once. You understand, I must pay you for the bulls in cash. Banks are a long way from here and subject to the whims of politics. Back here in the interior, we like to keep our money where we can get our hands on it."

Randy nodded indifferently. It made no difference to him how he got the money, just so that he got it. His father, like many oldtime Texans, had never trusted banks; for his own part, Randy Dent had never enjoyed sufficient funds to worry about them.

The ride back to the *fazenda* was made in silence. Hermanny seemed to have some problem on his mind, and Randy was beginning to feel strangely listless and dopey. As they rode up to the ranch house, he mentioned it to the *fazendeiro.*

Hermanny chuckled. "It's the climate, my friend. There are two things one must do in this land: take a siesta—a short half-hour is sufficient—and eat plenty of meat to build up the red corpuscles in the body which this climate destroys. Otherwise it will lower the blood pressure and sap the strength."

RANDY felt better for a nap. Afterward, he wandered down to the hide-room, where a native couple squatted on their hams scraping a large jaguar skin. A dozen small chickens scampered over the work, snatching up the shreds of fat.

As Randy watched, Eduardo Valez came in. He was polite enough, but Randy sensed a vague antagonism. Eduardo told him something of the various kinds of *tigres* in the Mato Grosso, then asked: "Maybe you would like to go for a *tigre* hunt, yes?"

Randy shook his head. "Thanks, but I'm leaving for my own country tomorrow."

Eduardo gave him a long, slow look. "That is well," he grunted, and walked away.

"Hmmm! Funny guy," Randy mused, then forgot about it.

He had dinner that night with Hermanny. During the meal, the *fazendeiro* questioned him about his early life, the ranches where he had worked, their methods, and his own personal tribulation. Randy was not accustomed to dis-

cussing his own affairs, and he found it difficult to talk, but Hermanny was so direct and blunt, it was impossible not to answer without being rude. And Hermanny seemed to have some purpose behind his queries, a purpose that did not come out until later, when they went out into the patio for coffee.

The sun had gone, and the place was filled with a soft, purple afterglow. A flame-colored macaw sat on a perch in front of a shrine niche in one wall. For a long time they smoked in silence, then Hermanny hitched his chair up close to Randy's.

"All this day I have watched and studied you, my friend," he began slowly, feeling his way along. "You are a strong man, a man of courage, an honest man. That I know."

Randy didn't know what to say, so he blew a smoke-ring and watched it melt into the dusk.

Hermanny sighed and went on: "Today you have seen this great valley. Before many tomorrows have rolled by, it will teem with cattle, good cattle. The scrubs will vanish—the scrub cattle and the human scrubs. The man with good herds will be rich. That must follow as night follows day; it is not only a prophecy, it is history."

His voice changed, and hardened. "Barbosa's death is a serious loss to me. He was my friend, as well as my partner. In fact, not many people knew that I was even a partner, for I did most of the work. Barbosa was a fine man; a gentleman and an aristocrat; his ancestors were Portuguese noblemen. But he was content with what we had. He could not see the great empire here for the taking. Now . . . it is difficult in this country to find a man on whom I can depend. Eduardo is the best man I have, but he was born here in the Mato Grosso, and is therefore related to nearly everyone in this accursed land. Blood runs thick here, and for this reason I cannot entirely trust him, for my interests are not always the interests of these filthy peasants."

"That's unfortunate," commented Randy.

"Bah—they are a sickly batch of swine! But look, what I am getting at is this: here near the Guarani Border everyone speaks Spanish as well as Portuguese, for it is the language of nearly every other country of South America except Brazil. You speak Spanish, and you have had experience dealing with Mexicans. My friend, how would you like to be my *capitaz*—my head man here?"

Randy covered his surprise by taking out the makings of a smoke. He shook a little tobacco into the paper curved

between his fingers—considering. There was nothing to take him back to Texas, nothing that could not wait. He could send the money back to Jim Hanley. This was a new land, a rich land, and there was a future here—and excitement and conflict. And there was also Mariana Figuereido.

RANDY put the cigarette into his mouth, and shook his head. "Thanks for the offer," he said slowly. "But I'm heading back to Texas to start a little ranch of my own."

A shadow of impatience crossed the face of the older man. He spoke persuasively. "The days of the little ranches are over, *amigo*. That is the law of economic determinism. In these strenuous days of competition, with the whole world hungry for food, only the large cattle empires can serve and survive, for it takes fabulous sums to improve herds and deal in large-scale breeding. Look you—those seven bulls are a case in point. How many cattlemen in the Mato Grosso can lay out twenty-five thousand dollars in gold merely to improve their stock?" He spread the fingers of one hand. "Fewer than my fingers," he said emphatically. "Little ranches? Bah, they are the curse of this or any other country, even yours."

Randy felt irked. "Independence is worth something," he said.

Hermanny leaned toward him. "Independence is a myth, a *myth!* The Paradise is full of little ranches. Are they independent because they raise no-good cattle to eke out an existence? *Creolas* for which they cannot get two dollars a head, and thus must walk them for three months to the markets of São Paulo because it does not pay to ship them? Is that independence, *amigo?*" He shook his head, and without waiting for an answer, went on: "That is being a slave to the land. Look, man—you have heard this is a rich land. It has diamonds and oil and timber and many kinds of minerals. That is true. But those things will not develop the country, nor make it rich. Those things cut the arteries of the land and bleed it to death. For three hundred years they have been bleeding this country; there was commercial traffic on the Paraguay River even before your great Mississippi was discovered. Yet this land is still primitive. No, *amigo,* the thing that will lift this land up is the thing that made your country great—cattle! Cattle alone will make this the greatest state in the world!"

His voice dropped. "Now, my friend, you stay here with me and I will make you a very, very rich man! Yes?"

Randy smoked in silence. Somehow he had a sense of being smothered. There was a brutal logic to Hermanny's argument that he did not seem able to refute. Yet instinct warned him there was something wrong with it.

Finally he stubbed out his smoke. "You're probably right," he admitted, "but every man must make his own shadow. Me, I want my own outfit."

Before the *fazendeiro* could answer, there came the drum of horses' hooves in the quadrangle, and an instant later Eduardo strode into the patio. He brought with him the smell of horse and man sweat. He spoke quickly in Portuguese. Hermanny cursed and sprang to his feet. Randy couldn't follow what was being said, but a moment later Eduardo ran out. The horses galloped out of hearing.

"The bandit Manoel has crossed the river," Hermanny told Randy. "Do you wish to ride down there?"

Randy shook his head. "No, I'll turn in. I'd like to get away in the morning, if I can."

The *fazendeiro* shrugged. "As you wish. I will have the money ready and Eduardo can accompany you to the railroad. Meanwhile, consider well my words. I will pay much money for a man on whom I can depend."

He clapped his hands and a servant appeared. Hermanny gave an order and walked with the Texan to the door. The servant reappeared with a gun belt and hat. A horse waited in the quadrangle.

Hermanny took the reins. "When they kill that Manoel, I want to be there," he said with relish. "In your country it is the custom to lynch cattle-thieves, but here we stone them to death. To one who has lost to these dogs, it can be

a very, very pleasant sight." He swung into the saddle. "Until tomorrow, *amigo!*" The horse swerved and was gone.

Randy stood where he was until the drum of hooves had faded, then he turned and walked slowly across the empty quadrangle to his room next to the saddle-house. He found himself half-hoping they wouldn't catch the one-eyed little bandit. He shrugged away the touch of sentiment. After all, the man was a cattle-thief. Somewhere in the native quarter outside the square, a guitar strummed softly. A woman's laughter was followed by a pleasant silence. These sounds of a home, of music and a woman's laughter, of the sweet stillness that suggested so many things —these sounds brought out the deep-rooted loneliness in him and made futile all the things that had happened, or that seemed likely to happen in his future. It made him feel that he was living without touching life. He was an onlooker, a drifter riding the tides of existence with neither purpose nor value. He did not belong.

He stood before the door of his room, finishing his smoke. When he felt the butt glow warm against his lips, he tossed it away, and with one last look at the stars, stepped inside. It took him a moment to get the starlight out of his eyes so that he could distinguish things in the soft semi-darkness of the room.

Then he saw Manoel grinning at him from the bed!

Then he saw Manoel grinning at him from the bed.

RANDY gaped. The surprise was complete. Manoel was stretched comfortably on his back, his hands folded behind his head, and the sour smell of him—of

sweat-saturated, slept-in clothing, of horse and wine and tobacco blended—permeated the small room.

" 'Allo, *amigo,*" he said genially. "I am listen to the moosic. It make the heart think of many t'ings, *não?* A woman, mebbe?"

Randy found his voice. "What in hell are you doing here?"

Manoel sighed, and reluctantly swung his bare feet to the floor. "I 'ave come for my money, *senhor.* Did you not offer to pay feefty. . . ?"

"You crazy damn fool!" raged Randy. "Hermanny and his riders are out searching for you right this minute!"

Manoel flashed a toothy smile. "An' I am here, *não?* Some fon, eh, *amigo?*"

"It's not funny to me! If they find you here, I'll be on the spot, and you'll be stoned to death. You're a cattle-thief, Manoel! You murdered Barbosa, too."

Manoel spread his chubby hands. "The *gringo* he believe all he hear, perhaps? That is too bad. Manoel he do not understand. I save your nize bulls from the feesh; I get you down here at risk of my good neck. Now you no like me. For that I am sorry!"

Randy yanked out his wallet, extracted a *conto*—the equivalent of fifty dollars in American money—and handed it to the fat man.

"Here—take this and get out!"

Manoel heaved a mighty sigh, but took the money. "This Bento Hermanny—did he ask you should stay down here an' work for heem, *não?*"

"What business is that of yours?"

"You will please not to do it, *amigo,*" pleaded the fat man softly. "In my heart it would be heavy to keel wan so ver' nice man. *Amigo,* this Hermanny is bad. He is no Brazilian, that wan! He want to steal the land from my people. To burn their homes, to keel their sons—so he can 'ave much land like wan ancient baron. Those days are gone, *senhor.* They must not return. *Não, não!*"

"That's no concern of mine," snapped Randy impatiently. "Get moving!"

Manoel rolled his one good eye. "Ah, *amigo,* if only you 'ad some-wan to love you could understand. That place we stop the first night together; that leetle house with the bamboo fence. Once I live there, *senhor!* I was 'appy with Conchita who was ver' fat an' laugh too much. Then come this Bento Hermanny, an' I 'ave to go. Is that not sad, *não?*"

Randy began to feel like a fool. "Look—if it's any consolation to you, I'm leaving here tomorrow for Texas. Now get the hell out of here before you're trapped!"

Manoel sighed again, then chuckled. "*Até logo, amigo!*" He stepped to the door and stood silhouetted against the soft blackness of the night. A dog barked somewhere across the square. Manoel waved his arm in farewell, then backed into the night. When Randy looked out an instant later, he had vanished.

Randy went slowly back inside. He adjusted the mosquito netting over his bed and turned in. But somehow, sleep eluded him. He was still tossing restlessly when the riders pounded into the quadrangle several hours later. From their angry cursing, he knew that Manoel had escaped.

CHAPTER V

A MAN BELONGS—

IT WAS five o'clock in the morning when Randy Dent walked out of the *fazenda* house with a little over five hundred *contos de reis*—approximately twenty-five thousand dollars American—carefully distributed in a saddle-bag and a fat money-belt worn under his shirt. Hermanny had made him a present of the accordion boots, the *bombachas,* and a *pala,* a light poncho worn over the body as a protection against the scorching sun. Randy lowered his holster a trifle where it would be closer to hand. Bento Hermanny walked with him into the quadrangle where Eduardo waited with a pair of fast horses.

"I had great hopes that perhaps you would change your mind and work here with me," said the *fazendeiro.*

Randy shook his head. "Thanks, *senhor,* but this isn't my country. I don't belong."

The other shrugged. "As you see it." He nodded at Eduardo and continued in English. "Eduardo speaks no English,

but he is tough and an excellent shot. He does not know of the money you carry, so there is no need to mention it. You should have no trouble. None the less, *amigo,* with bandits infesting this region, I cannot be responsible for your safety."

"You have my receipt for the money," Randy reminded him.

Hermanny shook hands, then put his arms around Randy and clapped him on the shoulders, Brazilian fashion. "*Até manha, amigo!* Good-bye, friend, and if you ever want a job, come to me."

Randy grinned, threw his bag across the saddle, and mounted. He hadn't felt so content and sure of himself in years. He had delivered the bulls and now the money was in his possession, and he was anxious to get back to Texas. With a salute to the *fazendeiro,* he nodded at his guide. Eduardo pirouetted his horse, and they cantered out of the yard.

There was an air of competence about Eduardo Valez that Randy liked. He rode very straight in his saddle, with a hawkish alertness. A heavy Spanish revolver swung butt-foremost against his left thigh, and a well-handled carbine nestled in a saddle-scabbard. Eduardo, Randy decided, would be a hard man to surprise. In spite of all this, however, there was something wrong between them, and Randy couldn't figure out what it could be.

They wound down off the hill, skirted the Figuereido fence and cut north across the *campo.* The morning was cool, with layers of mist rising above the *pantanal,* but as the heat wore into the day, the air became heavy and humid. They rode hard, with only a brief stop at noon for meat and *maté.* Eduardo spoke very little.

Randy was just as well satisfied, for he had his own thoughts. He kept thinking of Manoel, and the things Manoel had told him. *It's none of your damn business,* he told himself, but questions kept cropping into his mind. He dwelt, too, on Hermanny's offer. He intuitively resented the *fazendeiro's* argument in favor of the great cattle empires. It was based on cold-blooded efficiency that ignored the humanitarian principles. Suddenly, he smiled a rueful smile. Why, hell, Hermanny's argument was much the same as the Nazis and Fascists had advanced to bolster their land grabs! No wonder it had a familiar ring!

He shrugged it aside and let his mind wander to Mariana Figuereido. He remembered the cool, moist lips and tried to imagine what they would be like if surrendered willingly. He wished now that he had ridden past the Figuereido ranch and offered his apologies.

THEY saw abundant game, and in the late afternoon, Eduardo shot a small deer and threw it across his saddle. It was the first time Randy had ever seen him smile. It changed the man completely, and for some inexplicable reason, Randy was suddenly sorry for him.

They met no other riders and from the route Eduardo was taking, Randy surmised they were carefully skirting the few small *fazendas* that dotted the region. The sun had already dropped over the distant *mato* when Eduardo gestured to a small grove of palms just off the trail.

Randy was glad enough to stop. He hadn't realized until he swung out of the saddle how tense were his nerves. While Eduardo gathered wood for a fire, he took the horses to water, then staked them close by. It was quite dark when he had done that.

Eduardo skinned the deer, slit the carcass up the middle, then opening it like a book, he speared it on a cross of slender green sticks and thrust it upright in the ground before the fire.

"*Churrasco,*" he grinned, and explained in Spanish that this was the South American method of barbecuing meat.

He maintained a very small fire, and when Randy started to throw a few sticks onto the blaze, Eduardo stopped him.

"*Não,* it is not well," the man said. "This is not a friendly country."

Randy didn't argue. "When will we reach the railroad?"

"We are taking a long route because it is safer," Eduardo explained. "But we will be there by tomorrow night." He

was silent for a while, then asked: "Tell me, *senhor,* about this killing of Pedro Barbosa? Was he given a chance for his life?"

"That I do not know. Only this—he was very dead."

Eduardo squatted moodily before the fire. "Dom Pedro was an honest man," he mused.

"Do you belong to this land, Eduardo?" Randy asked.

The man nodded his dark head. "Here I was born. Tell me—does not a man belong where he was born?"

"I would say yes to that."

"Then I belong, *senhor.*"

He lapsed silent, so Randy let it go. The crisp odor of the meat tantalized him, for he was now tired and hungry. He propped up his saddle, with the money bag still secured to it, as a headrest and stretched on the ground, with the fire between himself and the other. He lay there and watched the play of light on Eduardo's face.

Eduardo must have heard a sound, for he straightened as if listening. As he started to turn his head, the slug caught him in the back. It seemed to Randy that he saw the effect of the bullet before he heard the flat uncompromising bark of the gun. Eduardo had been hunkered down. Now the impact of the bullet stretched him a little so that he appeared to dive forward. He fell with his face close to the sizzling deer.

As Eduardo dropped, Randy sprang sideways, scattering the fire with one kick. The darkness was absolute. He pawed out his gun and tried to set himself. Then a rifle sent its cold *spa-n-n-n-g* across the jungle night. An invisible hand seemed to yank Randy's leg from under him. The gun flew out of his hand as he went down.

He rolled, trying to grope for it in the darkness. A macaw screamed above him. Then a strange flame exploded in his head. . . .

A LONG time later he was thinking: *Eduardo can't be truly dead! I was just beginning to know him. I had seen him smile. He was a person with thoughts, strange thoughts for a cowhand.' He was born here, he said. . . .*

Randy lay still, trying to reason what had happened before he forced open his heavy lids. *I'm so damned thirsty!* His body felt as if a thousand heated needles were being stabbed into his flesh. As he floated on the rim of consciousness, the pain got worse, forcing open his eyes. He found himself covered with small red ants. They drove him to his knees, but when he tried to stand erect, his left leg buckled, and he toppled back on his face.

Strangely, the sun was up. *That's wrong,* he thought. *It is still night!* He flattened his palms on the dirt and struggled to his knees again.

Then he saw Eduardo!

Randy stared until his eyes came into sharp focus. There was a huge black *urubu* perched on Eduardo's back. Randy went sick. Half-conscious, he ran his hands down his tortured body.

The money belt was gone!

(End of Part I)

GIVE A DOG A NAME

By ARTHUR HAWTHORNE CARHART

ILLUSTRATED BY PETER KUHLHOFF

"Every man has his price, Lige. There's yours."

THE single room of the log cabin abruptly suggested the interior of a box trap. Lige Oxley looked dully at several steel traps hanging from wooden pegs driven into the wall, a coyote pelt drying on a wooden stretcher and his old snowshoes beside the rag-caulked window. They seemed foreign and unfamiliar. The feeling of being caught, deepened. It had begun just now when the boy brought a summons from Sheriff Newt Slayne calling Lige to the courthouse.

Lige sat heavily on the edge of his unmade bunk. He'd better do some thinking. The only reason Newt Slayne would send for him was because the trouble back in Idaho had come to life. A federal charge of possessing and transporting illegal fur meant Leavenworth if they proved it. His thoughts hung up there, like logs jamming on a rock when the river is falling.

The wind shook the window. Tattered clouds that had given birth to snow last night, hung sullenly above the town. It

was the sort of day to drag on a man's spirit.

Trump, the trail dog, paced stiffly from his corner and laid his homely muzzle on Lige's mackinaw-covered thigh. Lige ran his calloused hand over the dog's head before drawing rubber, four-buckle overshoes over his sheepskin shoe pacs. Trump knew something was going wrong.

"We've always been sorta outlaw, pup," said Lige. "Sheriff Slayne's just going to make it official, that's all."

It sure would help if he could talk this over with Trump. But you couldn't explain to a dog how the law works. Not when you don't quite understand it sometimes, yourself. If it had been something wrong on the trapline, Trump would understand quick enough; they both would. But statutes in books are a heap different than the law of the wilderness. If Syd Willford was here he'd talk it over and keep his mouth shut afterward. You could bank on Syd. He had a pretty good head on him for a young fellow. But he wasn't here.

Lige stood before a cracked mirror and raked a broken comb through straggling hair. Sure needed a haircut and a shave. They'd have to wait. Right now he better shoulder into his old mackinaw coat, pull on the old toque cap, and go on to see what Slayne wanted.

HE stepped into the wintry morning. The wind streamed past the cabin corner and he stood there a moment, trying to feel free. But the cold air didn't wash away that feeling of being caught. Even the dusky, weak-bodied clouds with their slate-gray bellies, threatened to settle down and surround him.

Trump scampered past the picket gate with the broken hinge. New snow made him frisky. Cold roughed up his tawny, wire-haired coat. That was an inheritance from his airedale father. His floppy ears, the size and set of his feet, his ratty tail and his nose for trailing, came from his bloodhound mother. One ear was split. He'd got that the day Lige had a foot caught in a windfall and a wounded bear had charged. Trump charged, too, and it stopped the bear long enough for Lige to get free and shoot. Trump was an ugly dog. Everyone thought so, except Lige.

"We're mongrels, my dog and me," Lige often had said. "Perhaps that's why we understand each other."

There was another tie between them that Lige thought about pretty often but didn't mention. Nobody wants to admit he and his dog are more or less outlaw, even if others say so.

Lige had been dodging the law and Trump was about to be shot the day they met some years ago. The shepherd had seen Trump smelling a coyote-killed lamb. He believed Trump guilty. Lige saw the true story of the coyote kill all around the dead lamb. Dogs don't cut a lamb's throat like a coyote does. Lige didn't point this out to the sheep man. He just saw the dog was judged guilty by circumstantial evidence, like Lige had been charged with law-breaking back in Idaho, and that made them two of a kind.

"Give you a dollar for the dog," Lige had offered.

"Take him," the herder said. "But get him off my sheep range."

Trump must have realized he'd been pulled out of a bad spot. From that hour he looked to Lige for orders. Even without being given a command, he knew pretty much what was expected of him. The way he came back now, after a little run, and whined, and walked slowly, showed plain enough he knew they were going toward trouble of some kind.

The gloom of the day deepened as they reached plank sidewalks in front of the town's few stores. The humid wind swept from the west, across thin snow melting on sage hills down-country. Early loafers had been driven indoors. They would group around the cast-iron stoves in Carmody's livery, or the Black Rapids Trading Company, warming their weather-chapped hands and gossiping. Later, when Marty's bar opened, some would traipse in there, shedding sheepskin coats as arguments and discussions got heated up. By afternoon they probably would be talking about Sheriff Newt Slayne holding Lige Oxley for Idaho authorities. Before nightfall

they'd have Lige painted black as a boot. He'd be tried, judged and condemned by the he-gossips of Black Rapids, no matter what the Idaho court might decide later.

There'd be talk about Trump, too. They'd say nobody would want a jailbird's dog. Someone would tell how Trump bit Jig Wilson the day Jig got drunk and tried to beat up Lige because it looked like a pleasant thing to do. The citizens wouldn't care what became of Trump. He'd probably haunt back doors, scavenging food, until someone shot him or poisoned him and felt righteous doing it.

Now there was something to really worry about—what was likely to happen to Trump. A dog needs a man to tie to. Or he goes plumb outlaw and gets shot, or he just starves, wondering why he's been deserted.

The biting wind threaded through Lige's old clothes. The hole in his mackinaw breeches let in the breeze and it chilled his legs clear down to heavy socks above the shoe pacs. The air currents raked the beard stubble on his lean chin and bleared his eyes. A slate-gray cloud hung over Mica Ridge beyond the town and that meant more snow coming. Bony twigs of bowed cottonwoods rattled as Lige came to the stone archway entrance to the courthouse.

Inside the door, the hallway was absurdly high. A radiator hissed and burped little spits of hot water into a rusty syrup bucket. The odor which oozes through old public buildings hung heavy. At the end of the hall, a strip of black enamel tin scribed with tarnished gilt letters and hanging by rusty little chains, marked Newt Slayne's office. Lige stood some seconds before the door.

This was a last chance to turn back. Men with some weight and influence could enter here with assurance. The little fellows always got it in the neck. Lige knew Newt Slayne always had suspected him of being against the law. Sheriffs are often apt to feel that way about trappers. But Slayne had been square enough in his cold, hard fashion. There wasn't much use in running, anyway. He'd run before, and that had made everyone think he sure was guilty.

HE opened the door, stepped inside, halted. Trump stood close by. Newt Slayne sat behind his disordered desk, long legs stretched out with boot heels resting on a dusty window sill. He turned his head and Lige met the cold blue of the sheriff's eyes.

"Come in," Slayne said, "and sit down."

Lige bunched into a bow-back chair. Slayne chewed a thin cigar and looked out the window, eyes squinting until the crows' feet webbed his temples. Often people felt he was accusing them without a word said.

The room was hard-faced, like the sheriff. The walls were bare and unfriendly with nothing to relieve blank surfaces except an elkhorn gun rack heavy with several rifles and a large calendar bearing the full length picture of a long-legged girl, half veiled in a misty black gown. She was smiling, but it was a false note in this room. Slayne continued to look out through the dust-dimmed window.

"Race Moodie was murdered last night." The sheriff's voice was thin and cold, like the smooth edge of a logger's saw. Everything about him was thin and sharp. Lines in his smooth-shaven cheeks were like cracks in bare rock. His sandy brows were straight above his arched nose. Even his fawn-colored gabardine shirt and whipcord breeches were pressed to exact lines. "You didn't get along with Race Moodie, did you?"

Slayne hauled his boot heels down off the sill.

"No more than a lot of people did," said Lige.

"That's true enough," agreed Slayne. "He wasn't liked."

People of Black Rapids often speculated on why Marty kept Race Moodie running the games in the room back of the saloon. Two good reasons were generally accepted. Moodie had too much deadwood on Marty to be fired, and he also made the games pay a handsome profit.

At first meeting, people were inclined to misjudge Moodie. He was plump, with the face of a pinkish, adult cherub. After they looked twice, folks saw the

piggish glint in his small eyes and the selfishness lined around his pouty mouth. He tried to look native by dressing in expensive plaid shirts and range pants, but the patent leather, button-fastened shoes with light gray cloth tops gave him away. He was a superstitious man. He thought those shoes were his luck and he had them made to order in the city. It's money well spent if you can buy luck that way.

"I ain't seen Moodie in a week," said Lige. The sweat began to come into his palms.

"I know," said Slayne. "You didn't get in from your Leedy Creek trapline last night until after midnight."

"I didn't have anything to do with Moodie's murder."

"Sure you didn't, Lige. But you're having a lot to do with it from here on."

Lige felt the waiting. Slayne held the raveled cigar between long index finger and thumb. He threw it away and took a fresh one from the pocket of his fawn-colored shirt.

"Moodie had six thousand cash on him last night," he said.

"Never heard of Moodie carrying that much money on him."

Slayne began to grind on the cigar, reset his heels on the window sill and said, "Wasn't Moodie's money. Belonged to Duke Lormond."

"Duke should have more sense than to trust Moodie with that much."

"Sure. But Duke was liquored. Had this cash in his pocket to buy feeder stock in Denver. Didn't want to keep that much cash on him while he was drinking. He went to Marty's bar to put it in the safe. Marty had gone down to his mine at Lancer Mountain and had locked the safe. Duke left the money anyway. Moodie took it home with him."

THE sheriff shifted to rest his forearms on the desk. His eyes were like chips of blue February ice.

"Duke went to Moodie's cabin about daybreak to get his money." The sheriff drew criss-cross lines on the desk blotter. "Furniture in the cabin was busted and blood was splashed around. Marks show a body was dragged across the snow to the river and dumped into the rapids. Snow quit about eleven last night. There was a little new snow in the tracks so this business happened around ten thirty."

"Someone must have known Moodie had Duke's money," said Lige.

"Some did." Slayne nodded and pursed his lips. "Syd Willford knew it."

"Syd didn't kill Moodie." Lige forgot about the law wanting him.

Slayne nodded, looked hard for a moment, then picked the ragged butted cigar from his lips and said, "I knew you'd feel that way, Lige. Syd wrestled you through high-country flu last spring."

"Saved my life."

"I know," said Slayne. "I've reckoned you'd stand up for Syd. But he was in Marty's arguing about a debt he owed Moodie when Duke Lormond turned over the money. He heard Moodie tell Duke the safe was locked."

"Don't prove nothing."

"That's your way of looking at it." Slayne squinted at the cigar. "Moodie has been threatening to take Syd's little ranch for that poker debt. Syd was seen trailing Moodie to the cabin last night."

"I ain't seen Syd lately," stated Lige. "He's been up to his ranch."

"You'll see him before the day's over." Newt Slayne hitched ahead to sit on the edge of his chair, his sharp face thrust forward. "Both Duke Lormond and Marty made it plain what they expected. There's an election coming up and I've got to have Syd in this office before nightfall."

Lormond with his big cattle outfit and Marty with his bar, held weight in county politics. Together, they could make or break any local official.

"If you're figuring on me rounding up Syd so you'll win the election, count me out." Lige got up from the bow-back chair.

"You're in this with all your chips." Slayne's voice began to rasp like a cold cross-cut in frozen wood. "It's that trail dog of yours I need."

"Trump won't follow a trail unless I tell him to."

"You'll see to it he follows this trail."

Slayne smiled and there was no mirth in it. "The tracks going away from where the body was tossed into the rapids cross the foot bridge to the north side of the river."

"Toward the Devil Trap country."

"You and Syd Willford know that country. Few others know the way through there to the railway. You and your dog are going in there with me."

"Count us both out." Lige put on his cap and took a step toward the door.

"Hold your horses," ordered Slayne. "I'd rather not do this. But every man has his price. Here's yours, Lige."

Slayne tossed a black-lettered handbill on the desk. Two years had passed since Lige Oxley had read one of those bills and had fled from Idaho.

"You've behaved yourself here," said Slayne. "I've watched you close enough. Didn't intend to do anything about this so long as you kept the law in this county. But—there's your price."

The black words seemed to rise up off the paper, threatening. Slayne stood, put on a leather jacket and went to the door, opening it.

"We'll have to travel," he said. "Marty and Duke Lormond rode up to the highway bridge to get across the river. They've got twenty miles to ride before they can get across Electric Gulch beyond the Devil Trap. We'll find Syd before they do."

Slayne stood there waiting. Just as though this all was settled. Trump looked up and Lige saw deep questioning in the dog's amber eyes. Things would be tough if Slayne caught Syd. That handbill from Idaho promised bad going in another direction. Slayne had said that was Lige Oxley's price. Going to jail wouldn't be so hard for himself but he couldn't look into Trump's eyes without thinking of what would happen to the dog. Just couldn't help thinking of Trump being left to shift for himself.

There was one way to do it. Kill Trump and then let Newt Slayne send a telegram to the law man up north. Maybe if he could understand, Trump would rather have this happen than to have Syd caught.

"Well, come on." Slayne moved toward the hallway.

TRUMP wiggled a little, stood on his rear legs, whined, and licked Lige's hand. The room suddenly was misty and blurred. Lige had an impulse to get outside, where no walls surrounded him. Maybe if he did, he could think this through. Slayne was grinning sort of thin and satisfied when they left the office.

The sound of the door closing behind them, echoed in the high-walled hall. There had been a metallic clank, like iron bars rattling, as the door came shut. Lige pulled his mackinaw closer and they stepped through the sandstone archway into the raw day.

The chill wind ran higher as they reached Race Moodie's cabin. At the door, Slayne turned aside to follow the red-smeared track toward the river. He was looking into the ragged water where it fanned from the rapids into the first whirlpool as Lige halted at the edge of the sharp little cliffs. The drag mark broke over the brink.

"Whatever was tossed in there won't show up until spring," remarked Slayne and turned back toward the cabin.

Lige Oxley felt wooden. He followed the sheriff and Trump as though pushed along. Trump's hound-voice broke once from inside the cabin. He was sniffing about the place. Slayne watched Lige approach with slow heaviness.

"Get your hound started." Slayne half pivoted toward the foot bridge.

"Look, Newt," said Lige. "If you take me back to the courthouse and wire up north for them to come and get me, that ought to help you in the election almost as much as tracking down Syd."

"You haven't broke the law in this county. Syd has."

"Me and Trump don't think Syd's guilty." Lige felt small and scrawny before the sheriff.

"I'm damned," said Slayne. "You really mean that."

"Guess I do, Newt. Here, Trump, come on here."

Trump didn't come. He was busy inside the cabin. Lige entered. Trump nosed a pair of those cloth topped shoes Moodie believed were his luck. They sat neatly under the bed.

"Come away from there; come on." Lige wanted to get this business finished.

Trump swung his tail. Gingerly he picked up one of the shoes and brought it to drop at Lige's feet. Often he had retrieved game and laid it at Lige's toes. Trump looked up expectantly, his eyes asking Lige to pick up the shoe.

"Good fellow," said Lige. This probably was the last time he'd pick up something Trump brought him. It would please the dog to have him accept it. He stooped and picked up the shoe to replace it beside the bed. He looked at it, and stared. Then laughed a little. It was a dry and dusty chuckle. He tossed the shoe to the bed and stepped out to where Slayne waited.

"We can pick up the trail the far end of the foot bridge," Lige told the sheriff.

Slayne squinted and remarked, "Changed your mind again?"

"Trump changed it for me," said Lige. "He'd have pretty rough going, I figure, if you sent me away, Newt."

"You think more of what's going to happen to that dog than you do of Syd Willford." Slayne's eyes probed.

"You said every man has his price. You thought you named mine. But you didn't include Trump. You missed part of the bet when you didn't."

"I don't follow you," said Slayne.

"Don't try," said Lige. "From here on we both follow Trump."

They were on the cable-sided foot bridge and Trump was beyond the first rock outcrop when the dog let out a bawl.

"It's hot trail," said Lige. "We're going to have to move fast."

They could follow footprints in the snow where the scrub lodgepole threw shade but the tracks were fading in the open spaces. The thirsty pine duff was swallowing the frozen shower of the night before. The wind was skinning off the upper side of the white blanket. On the long slope before they came to Woodbox Canyon, they lost the trail.

"That dog's so far ahead we'll never pick up the trail beyond this park," said Slayne.

"We might lose Trump but he won't lose us," said Lige.

THEY were half across the bare space when Trump came back and stood a moment on a rocky ridge. He saw Lige following and returned to trailing. They found tracks of dog and man in the next shaded spot. Ahead, Trump yelped and they followed trail and sound.

From this point on, they neared the Devil Traps. Choppy little cliffs bucked up starkly from round-nosed ridges. They all looked alike. The main Woodbox Canyon gashed through the rock in crazy corridors. Side pockets, ragged faced and brushy, broke through the canyon's walls. Some of the lateral gulches were wider than the main canyon where they joined it. Anyone would be tempted to turn into one of the draws because it looked more like the main canyon than the true course.

Trump did go into a side canyon. Lige knew it ended in an undercut cliff that would pocket anything without wings. Slayne argued that they should follow when Trump came out and started up the narrow stretch in Woodbox. Beyond the bend, where the main canyon was still narrower, Trump again turned into a gulch but came out before they came abreast.

"That's twice Syd's gone into a blind pocket," remarked Slayne.

"Looks like whoever went in there didn't know the country," Lige said.

"He's stampeded, that's all," declared Slayne. "Shows he's guilty and thinking about what's back of him instead of the way he's going."

Lige let it go at that. It was all right to let Slayne have such notions.

"This certainly is a place to trap a man," commented Slayne.

The canyon twisted deceivingly. The chopped cliffs were more broken and toothy, the pine more gnomish and weather-blasted. Where walls bent inward pines almost interlocked twigs to form a laced canopy. Where they had open views of the sky, they could see the clouds, smoky and dark, their paunches sagging with snow.

First flakes whirled through trees on the rims, falling into canyon eddies that spun and tossed the white particles as though unseen elfish hands played with

them before dropping them to pick up others floating down. The wind droned an overture to a blizzard.

"This isn't going to get better," said Slayne, anxiously. "The way the clouds hung this morning, I knew there'd be a real storm before it cleared."

The blizzard held off, hovering just above the scrambled dikes and ledges. They came to the main Devil Trap; a place where the canyon walls fled back, circled and came near to each other again somewhere across the brushy basin. There were a half dozen canyons breaking through the rims, but all except one was a blind pocket. While they stood a moment, under the glowering sky, the first blinding wash of snow came. The near hills faded. An eerie twilight shrouded brush, trees and rocks.

"This means business," remarked Slayne. And when the wind sound died, he said, "I'm in favor of getting back to town while we can."

"It ain't bad going back," Lige assured him. "Most of the side canyons slant down country so you don't go into them so readily as when you're coming up."

"Being elected again wouldn't do me much good if I froze." There was no fear in that; just Newt Slayne's way of looking straight at whatever he faced. "Let's get along. Where's that dog?"

Lige began to whistle; a trilling note. He walked slowly, calling Trump. The storm drowned his voice and he kept moving.

Once Newt Slayne heard Trump bawl from some rocky hole in the side of the Devil Trap. The sound might have come from any direction, thrown by the wind. New snow poured in on the sheriff. Trains of wind trundled through the trees above the rims. Lige had disappeared from the walled basin when the squall let up. Another curtain of snow crept across the brush and it was thick as straws in a broom. It took about that long to figure what had happened.

NEWT knew he was a fool for sure. Lige had planned the deal before they left Black Rapids. It was slick and sure-fire. Getting into the main Devil Trap, with its confusing side gulches about the time the storm hit, Lige could get away, follow the main canyon beyond, and leave Newt Slayne there. If he went ahead, he'd be trapped in rock and snow. If he turned back, now, while he could get started down the canyon, back toward town, Lige could warn Syd Willford and then skip the country. It sure was a neat trick the trapper had played.

Sure was a fool. Better get started right now, back toward home. If this business was found out he wouldn't get elected. If he kept his mouth shut nobody would know what had happened. He'd keep his mouth shut.

There was a deeper chill in the air. That was a savage howl the wind made. Daylight would just about last if he hurried. Maybe it wouldn't. Maybe before election they'd be thawing him out so his good suit could be put on him and he'd fit better into a box. He could smile, thinly, at that thought. It could happen, but he'd have to bog down first, and get sleepy. If only the pouring white of the snow would let up so he could see a few landmarks they'd passed on the way up, he'd feel a lot more certain he was still in the main canyon. The point where he had started back must be a good two miles behind him by now.

He stopped. This wasn't the main canyon. He was in a side gulch where the cliffs boxed the way directly ahead. The filmy cascades of snow were blinding. The sense of being lost surged through him and he quieted an impulse to run. He walked instead, back toward the point where he must have left the main trail. But he didn't get there. He was in another pocket of the branch canyon—or it might be the same one he was in before and it looked different. He turned to face away from the cliffs. Now the touch of stampede got into his legs and he couldn't rein in his hurry.

The brush in the bottom of the draw raked the sheriff's face, clutched at his leather jacket and tore his whipcord trousers. Rocks thrust up in his path. He fought the country, even while his good sense told him that was fatal. He hung up in the brush, panting, listening, trying to stare through the snow cur-

tains and find a familiar rock or tree. He better get a breath and try again.

He knew before he moved how totally lost he was. He couldn't stay here and to go anywhere might be worse.

The voice of Trump bawling, just beyond the brush thicket threw a chill down his back, and then he yelled. He'd never let loose such a call before, even to a friend. His second shout, as Trump floundered toward him, was not so high pitched but there was that same note in it. Trump came, swinging his hairless tail and grinning foolishly.

"Go on, boy," said Slayne. "I'll follow you."

He stopped, though, as Trump started away. It seemed like that must be the wrong direction. Trump came back when called but then struck out in that wrong direction again.

"All right." Newt Slayne had a grim smile all to himself. "I banked on you in the first place. I'd be a poor sport to quit now."

A few rods along the cliff, Trump stopped and looked up. Then strutted to a split timber door in a log wall that stood against the face of the cliff. For several moments, Sheriff Slayne studied that queer construction; a log wall that appeared to be flat against the vertical rock. Trump was nosing at the door.

There usually is something to see beyond a door. But one needed cat's eyes or a light to see much after stepping through this one. Newt Slayne finally did get a match lit. It didn't show a lot. There were twenty, maybe thirty hides drying on willow hoop stretchers, all standing neatly against the cave wall.

Trump cocked his good ear, and when he heard the whistle, he went out through the door like a rocket. The next whistle was nearer and Slayne knew Lige was coming. He stepped outside, closed the door and waited.

Maybe before election they'd be thawing him out so his good suit could be put on him.

TWO men came out of the twilight. They were so pasted with snow they would have been invisible in the storm except as they moved. Lige was ahead; the other man followed with his head bowed as though he couldn't look ahead on the trail he was traveling.

"Trump caught your trail where you turned off," said Lige. "He knew you'd lost your way."

"He led me here. Guess he knew you'd be coming here too," Slayne said.

"Trump probably figured we better hole in here tonight," said Lige, as he opened the door.

It was night-black inside until Lige lit a match and touched it to a stack of dry pitch-pine splinters ready-stacked against a fire-blackened section of the cave wall. The smoke dragged up through a cleft in the rock, and then the flames grew until the room was lighted.

The sheriff turned to the other man, expecting to meet the half humorous challenge of Syd Willford's lean, youngish face. But it wasn't Syd.

"What in hell? You're dead!"

Lige Oxley laughed a little, sort of dry and dusty. He'd wondered what Newt would say when he faced Race Moodie.

"You've caught up with your murder," said Lige.

"It's scrambled," said Newt.

"It wasn't," countered Lige, "from the time Trump lugged out that shoe of Moodie's and laid in at my feet."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Shoe had a splotch of blood on it, half on the flap and half outside where the flap buttoned."

"Isn't clear." Slayne shook his head.

"Clear if you see it," insisted Lige. "The spot was made with the shoe buttoned. Moodie took 'em off after he'd killed the little tramp burro he drug to the rapids. He put on the boots he's wearing now before he struck out. Spot wouldn't have been made like it was if he hadn't been wearing 'em when it was made and then took 'em off afterward. Nobody's going to stop to take off shoes of a man he's killed. So I knew Moodie was alive to take 'em off."

"What you got to say, Moodie?" Slayne turned abruptly on the gambler.

"Lost my luck when I didn't wear them shoes," Moodie said. "I'm not saying anything beyond that."

"He said it all when I caught him," said Lige. "He figured Syd would be blamed for murdering him. He's got some of Marty's cash beside Duke Lormond's cow money. Offered me a thousand if I'd get him to the railroad."

"The damn fool hit me." Moodie whined a little.

"Not a bad idea." Slayne turned toward Lige. "But why?"

"One for Syd," said Lige. "You'd have blamed him, long as you thought Moodie was dead. Getting Syd clear's worth more than any man's money."

"That," said the sheriff, "is worth something, too."

Lige turned back to fire building. He seemed awfully shrunken in his heavy coat; wiry, but pinched, as though something shriveled him.

Slayne watched the light build up. "About that Idaho business, Lige," the sheriff said, looking into the fire. "Forget it. Long as a man behaves himself in this county, he'll get along with the law hereabouts."

"Figure on keeping the law as I see it," said Lige Oxley.

"And one law," said Newt Slayne, "is to stand by a friend. Your way suits me."

"Well," said Lige, "I better see if there's some scraps of stuff around here that's fit to eat. This sort of work makes a man have an appetite. I'll bet Trump's hungry, too. He's done a day's work."

THE PHANTOM CARAVEL

By R. A. EMBERG

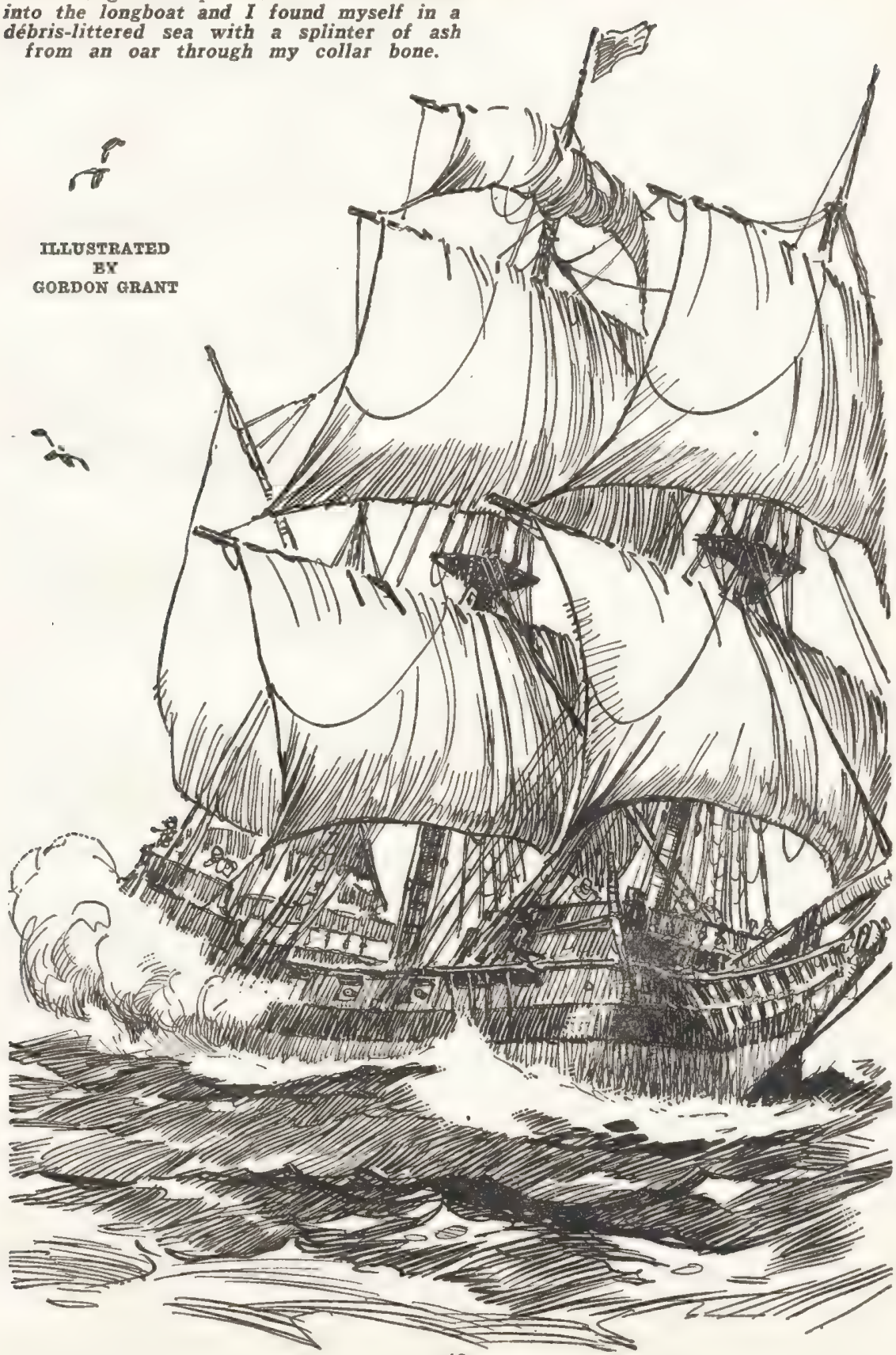
Note:—Martin Eggleston, an old-time Great Lakes shipmate of mine, now a truck-farmer on Long Island, knowing of my interest in the early history of Great Lakes shipping, and my writings on that subject, sent me the appended journal which he had unearthed on his farm while excavating for a new building. Realizing the significance of this document I pass it on.

Written in archaic English, faded with time and soil, it is still legible. My only liberties with the manuscript have been its translation into a more modern idiom. No addition of mine, no explanation, can make it more comprehensive. It solves the mystery surrounding the loss of the caravel Griffon, the first vessel to sail the Great Lakes, which disappeared on her maiden cruise somewhere between Green Bay on Lake Michigan and the Niagara River in September of the year 1679.

Father Louis Hennepin who accompanied the ship on the first leg of her westward voyage writes in his Nouvelle Decouverte as follows: "The ship was hardly a league from the coast on her return voyage when it was tossed up by a violent storm in such a manner that

Red flame and a cloud of smoke belched from the great ship. Several balls smashed into the longboat and I found myself in a débris-littered sea with a splinter of ash from an oar through my collar bone.

ILLUSTRATED
BY
GORDON GRANT



it and its men were never heard from since. . . ."

Father Hennepin also states in later writings that an English pirate captured in the Bay of Biscay on LaSalle's voyage from La Rochelle to Quebec was a skilled builder of ships, and accordingly was given the task of building the Griffon, which assignment he performed to the complete satisfaction of LaSalle. Hennepin mourned that such an expert shipwright should have perished with the vessel.

That Harkness had something of the romanticist in him is evidenced by the insertion of verses at various places in the manuscript which in metre and rhyme are similar to those in the repertoire of the gentlemen from the sea with whom at times he was associated.

—R. A. E.

The Journal of John Harkness

THERE being much hue and cry in this Province of New York since Captain Kidd was removed to England, particularly about pirates and their ilk, and since I have had news that my lord, the Earl of Bellmont, will shortly order my arrest, it behooves me to look to my own safety. Although my last voyage was made with Tew in 1682, after which I settled down to become a country squire on my Long Island farm, never for a moment have I forgotten that reformed gentlemen from the sea are subject to public suspicion, and like to be hanged as not, should a public outcry arise as it has because of Kidd and his cruise in the *Adventure* galley.

A year ago I made preparations, and within the week I shall sail for a palm-island in the Indies where, with a few retainers, I may still look forward to the crossing of my cutlass blade with a French or Spanish rapier. Had King William an intelligent governor in New York I would not be forced to flee thus. Despite my past sins he would avail himself of my various skills, which are not a few (ask any Frenchman). In so doing he would also recognize my services to the Province. My word for it, if the word of a shipmate of Tom Tom Tew's be worth a farthing, that it was I who set back French schemes for the organization of New France, schemes which if successful would have led to the conquest of this province and not the retreat of Count Frontenac after Schenectady in 1690.

And so, before I shake the dust of New York forever from my boots, I have decided to set down an account of my activities in this regard. I have no illusions as to the disposition of such an account by the Earl of Bellmont, so I pass it on in such a manner that posterity and not Lord Bellmont shall be the judge. As soon as this journal is finished I shall place it in an oaken box which in turn I shall bury beneath the hearth of my Long Island farmhouse. It is reasonably certain that at some future time it will be unearthed.

My reasons for remaining silent all these years should be plain. When I first set foot in New York the Stuarts were still in power. Both Charles and James were the very good friends of Louis of France. Edmund Andros, Governor of New York, would have been only too willing to turn over to the French, or send to England, or take on himself the privilege and pleasure of hanging an enemy of all three monarchs, such as I was. Although William of Orange is King of England today, ousted dynasties have a way of returning to power. Tomorrow William may be out and James in. A wise man keeps his own council and saves his neck. He passes on to history the things that are significant, but which he could ill afford to make known to a fickle public.

I

An English lad is off to sea,
A-fleeing from King Charles-o,
A-taking up with a rover chief,
His fortune for to make-o.
So heave away with a roundelay,
This is the song to sing-o,
We're off for gold; and a well-filled hold,
We'll pluck from off the brine-o.

WE were drifting about in the fog that hung off La Rochelle, twenty of us, all that remained of the ship's company of the galley *Santa Margherita,* a captured Genoeseman, rammed three nights

ago by a great galleon coming out of the fog, and sunk so fast that only one longboat got away. What the galley manned by men of the Seven Seas was doing in the Bay of Biscay has no place in this journal. Gentlemen from the sea may be found in divers places at divers times.

Our water was gone. There was not a pistol, not a musket among us, only a half-dozen men had cutlasses, so we were mice to any cat of a Frenchman, Britisher or Spaniard which might come our way. We had no compass and there was no use rowing, for because of the fog we could not know in what direction a landfall lay; indeed, to make a landfall on any coast, France, Spain, Portugal, or England, meant short shrift. The only welcome we could expect would be with rope, chains and axe.

Suddenly the fog split in twain directly ahead, and a breeze rolled it up like a man rolling a parchment. The blue sky appeared and within a few moments a bright sun was shooting his rays straight from the zenith. A few miles away to the east hung a low misty coast that must have been France.

I had hardly ordered the oars out when out of the fogbank which still clung to the northern horizon loomed a big vessel, on a course that would bring her within hailing distance.

One or two of the men jumped up on the benches and rubbed their eyes. Some just sat and rubbed their throats, dry throats, which under that sun would soon be dryer. Perhaps the hemp, long looked forward to, was in the mind's eye, already constricting. Some such thoughts entered my head as I watched the big ship.

Jem Frye, the only other Englishman besides myself, a Cornishman, ran a thick dirty finger along the edge of a rusty cutlass.

"An' what'll yer be doin' abat yon, Cap'n?" jabbing a thumb northward.

Only that morning the crew had elected me captain, I who had been the carpenter of the *Santa Margherita,* and so far no circumstances had arisen for me to assert my nominal leadership.

I shaded my eyes and peered at the ship. "She's not an Englishman," I ventured, "nor a Spaniard. From the cut of her canvas she's either French or Dutch. If she's French, my lads, let's hope she won't see us, or we'll all be gracing gibbets at the first port she puts into. Get off those benches and spring on the oars, every man-jack of you!"

They fell to, but even the danger of capture could put little life into the stroke. We had been three days without food, without water.

As the big stranger neared with a brisk norther scattering the fog and hardening her canvas we saw rows of gunports along her side. There were many men on deck and in the rigging. We could not escape her notice; we were already observed. Portholes along the bow nearest us were opened and a gun-muzzle or two run out; and now we could make out the flag on her mizzen, the colors of France.

Commands were barked, men stood to the braces, and she heeled. Her yards aback, she stood up shivering. A hail in French came over the water. "What boat is that?"

I replied in the same tongue, and being neither prepared to make a reply nor to tell a plausible lie, I told the truth. Coming down from the north, an area in which we had not yet operated, she might not yet have knowledge of the damage we had done to shipping along the coast of Spain and France. "A boat of the Genoese galley *Santa Margherita,*" I cried back. "Run down in a fog and sunk three days ago by an unknown galleon. We are seamen in distress heading for yon coast now that the fog has lifted."

She was so close that I could hear the conversation on the poop. "Pirates in distress, ye mean," a man called derisively. "Aye, we were told to be on the watch for a pirate masquerading as a Genoese merchantman. . . ."

There was an order. I caught the glint of a match through an open port, the muzzle of a gun bearing down. "Back water for your lives!" I shouted. "Back—"

The blades dipped, caught, but too late. Red flame and a cloud of smoke belched from the ship! Another and another! One or several balls smashed

into the boat. For a second or two I was conscious of a great confusion, the flying of splinters, of men tossed into the air like nine-pins. The headless trunk of Jem Frye went by the board, drenching me with gore. Then I found myself in the water, in a débris-littered sea, with a stabbing pain in my left shoulder.

I swam about the wreckage calling down curses on the gunners. Nowhere could I see a living shipmate. The shots had raked the longboat from stem to stern. Nineteen men gone to Davy Jones. Only I survived—and a splinter of ash from an oar stuck out a hand's-breadth forward and aft of my collar bone.

A flame of anger surged through me. Oh, to sink my cutlass hilt-deep into him who had ordered that broadside!

Low in the water, clinging to a piece of gunwale, I watched the ship being put on her course, heard the bark of orders, the pipe of the boatswain. Perhaps her master was curious—the French aren't always good gunners—because within moments the vessel's bluff bows headed toward me, her bobstay within a foot of the water.

My cutlass dragged at my belt as a wave lifted me. The tug of the blade gave me confidence. If that bobstay came near enough, if I played dead, then from under the overhang of the bow I might get aboard—and stay there long enough to pay off on the score of my messmates. I became as motionless as the surging swells would permit, to all intent, a corpse clinging to a bit of drift, nevertheless watching that battlement of a bow drifting down on me.

I could hear a babble of conversation, the gurgle of the forefoot. A shadow was over me, and directly above, the bobstay.

With a desperate effort I shot out of the water and grasped the stay. I pulled myself up and rested a moment. So far as I knew I had not been seen. I gathered myself, shinned upward and gained the bow sprit where it came through the bulwarks. Another second and I was on the forward castle which was deserted except for one man. I must have looked like an avenging ghost of the sea, wet, with blood streaming from my shoulder, and a drawn cutlass. The man I faced let out a terrified yell and fled. I pursued him not at all dismayed by a tumult of cries from the waist. But blood and flesh can stand only so much. A dizziness assailed me. At the head of the stairs my knees buckled, I felt myself growing weak, lights flashed in my head and I fell forward. The deck sprang up to meet me. Then darkness—oblivion.

II

His heart was black as a foul midnight,
His hands with blood were red-o,
And he'd bought a pardon of the King,
From the due of his own messmates-o.
The bells in France shall toll, my lads,
For shipmates shot and drowned-o,
And an English lad in chains is bound,
And the devil waits his due-o.

THERE was still a darkness when I wakened, but a natural darkness, one that I recognized from the noises about me as the darkness of a ship's hold near the bow. The noises were the swish of water under the stem, the creak of timbers, the moan of cordage and the squeals of rats as they scampered by.

I was stiff and sore and my head and shoulder ached. I investigated my hurt. The splinter had been removed and a bandage of a sort put on. In touching my shoulder I discovered that my hands were chained, and a moment later that my feet were in the same condition, to a ringbolt in a stanchion. I had come to the end at last. At Bordeaux, or whatever port the ship was bound for, I could only hope for a swift death. Louis of France was as summary as Charles of England when it came to meting out swift punishment to those who for one reason or another, and heaven knows there were many reasons those days, had defied the laws of nations.

For instance, I, John Harkness, had not become a rover by choice. Charles II had been restored in 1660 while I was only a child of three. The Puritans were done with; Merrie England was herself again, or so the Royalists boasted. But Merrie England was drenched with blood after the Restoration. There

was my father. He had had no part of Cromwell, nor for that matter, the House of Stuart. He was no politician, no partisan, but a builder of good ships in the town of Bristol, a profession our family had followed nigh onto two hundred years, turning out ships that were the pride of British sailors, and trying to impart to me, a tall gawky lad, the skill of our family's calling.

But Charles' head wore an uneasy crown. Ever and ever the King's ministers must look to new victims. My father was denounced because he had rigged a man-o'-war for Admiral Blake during the Dutch War, brought to trial and executed, and our shipyard confiscated to the Crown.

Swearing vengeance on the Stuarts, nay on the whole race of mankind, I took up with a west-coast smuggler, a wine-lugger between Devonshire and Portugal. Hot-blooded, impetuous, it was natural that in time I found my way into the hazardous and prosperous profession that outlawed and wronged men of spirit seek. Three cruises in as many years, to Malabar, to the Dutch Islands of the Indies, to Araby, and I had enough gold, had I wished, to ransom the Bristol yard. But there was no safety, no haven for me in England. I was on the Admiralty's list of those doomed to stretch hemp on Tillbury Point. Now that I had fallen into the hands of the French I would doubtless find their brand of hemp every bit as fatal as the English.

My musings were interrupted by the sliding of bolts, the clatter of a door, a gleam of light, and the entry of a sailor accompanied by a most extraordinary person. He wore seamen's boots, a yellow silken vest, a knitted cap with a tassel, and a great leather coat. A brooch containing a pearl as large as a small grape caught up a crimson neckcloth. He was a tall, well put-up man, almost as large as myself, with a hooked nose and gray sardonic eyes. The costume was that of a gentleman from the sea, and he might have stepped off the quarterdeck of a rover had it not been for one thing. Instead of a good honest cutlass a foppish French rapier hung from a broad sash about his middle.

The sailor placed a half-loaf of bread and a beaker of water at my side, and at a growl from the big man departed.

MY visitor swung the lantern so that its full light fell on me. He grinned evilly, showing large yellow teeth. I tried to retain my composure, because that was not the first time I had seen that visage, the visage of a tousle-headed Dane and one-time shipmate, sailing master of the brig *Marta*, and later of the big three-master we had taken from the Grand Mogul in the Persian Gulf. Master Anton Lucas and I had never been friends. Across his left cheek was a livid scar which my cutlass had left one evening in Cadiz in a tempestuous argument over an unwilling Spanish maiden, a girl who reminded me of a sister in England. Nor was that the only time. I fought him again on the deck of the three-master, and I had made sharkbait of him had it not been for our captain who could not dispense with the navigating skill of Lucas at that time. Like all his race, Lucas was second to none when it came to navigation.

Lucas had disappeared the night we took the Genoese galley in the harbor of Cartagena, as did the fortune in pearls she carried, pearls lately come from the fisheries at Aden. Some thought him captured by the soldiery in the fierce fighting, but not I. Lucas was too cunning. More like him to have outwitted the soldiers as well as his own shipmates.

"Well, Englishman," he grinned maliciously as he stirred my ribs with a booted foot, "we meet again, eh? And in different circumstances than you last thought of, I'll wager."

"No doing of mine," I retorted. "Nor was I mistaken after Cartagena. You were a deserter—and perhaps a thief after all."

"Too long had I been in the company of you and your like," he replied. "As for the pearls, well, I got to them before any of my honest shipmates. And believe me, Englishman, I put them to good use. The Grand Monarch now wears a ring set with the largest, for which he was pleased to pardon my past

association with the offscourings of the seas."

"Louis is a fool then, Lucas. I always knew you for a thieving treacherous scoundrel! And had I my way you had been at the bottom of the sea that day in—"

He kicked me and for a moment the forepeak swam dizzily.

"That to teach you manners—and gratitude. Had it not been for me you would be food for the fishes. The seigneur was all for tossing you overboard. Recognizing an old shipmate I begged for your life. It was I who pulled the splinter from your shoulder and had the surgeon stop the flow of blood."

"Which might have been a kindness, master Lucas, had I not known you. I'll not thank you for saving my life. You probably hoped to see me throttled on a gibbet!"

"'Twould be a pleasure, that," he grimaced, "but before I am through with you you will have wished many times for a gibbet. I have never forgotten this," he touched the scar on his cheek, "nor another here," he tapped his breast, "nor yet another," he turned back the sleeve of his leather coat, "but most of all, Englishman, I remember the Spanish wench at Cadiz! Which was why I persuaded the seigneur to save your worthless life—for a time!"

"Never shall I cry mercy to you, Lucas. Some day I may have you under the edge of my cutlass again, and if I do—" I stared boldly into his malevolent eyes. "Do your worst."

He kicked the breath from me and went away, leaving me in inky darkness to slake my thirst with stinking water, and after a time to gnaw the loaf of moldy bread.

What freak of fortune had thrown my course again across that of Anton Lucas, and by what caprice of the same fickle goddess was he in the good graces of Louis of France and some great French seigneur? True, he had mentioned the bribe of a large pearl to the King of France, but that wouldn't account for his presence and authority aboard this French ship. Who was the seigneur, what was the ship and her destination? She wasn't a man-o'-war, but from what I had seen, rather a well-found merchantman. And wearing a rapier now instead of a cutlass seemed to mean that Lucas was a gentleman instead of a rascally Danish cutthroat—

It set ill in my condition to wrack my poor addled brains, and after turning the thing over in my mind and finding no solution I went to sleep. In my profession a man learns to conserve his strength.

I LOST count of the days, days so much alike in misery that many a man would have lost his mind had he to endure them. It was almost two months that I lay chained in that dirty forepeak with only savage rats for company, rats which disputed with me over the moldy bread brought once each day.

There were visits from Lucas which I welcomed despite the fact that after his departure my ribs were sore from breastbone to back where he had tried out his heavy seaboots. For one thing I hoped to gain information; for another his visits kept my hatred of him white-hot. There were days when he forgot to kick me, days when he boasted of the position he had acquired in the retinue of the French seigneur because of his skill in navigation, and though he mentioned neither name nor destination, it was apparent that the voyage was not that of an ordinary merchantman.

The chains, the food, the wound in my shoulder, the filth of my own body, the rats, were sapping both health and spirit. Only my hate of Lucas kept me alive. No longer did I pace the fathom allowed by my leg shackles, rather I lay in a stupor the clock around and even dispensed with shaking off the rats which nipped me now and then.

I don't know how it came about—perhaps the sailor who brought my food may have mentioned my state to somebody—because one day the seigneur himself, accompanied by another man, came with Lucas. In the dim light I could make little of either, except that the seigneur was a medium-sized man of about forty, and that his companion had only one arm.

"Mother of God!" the seigneur cried,

holding a hand to his nose. "What foul carrion have we here? The lanthorn this way till I look at this man!"

He inspected me from head to toe, the chains, the shackles, and even pinching my flesh. Then he turned wrathfully on Lucas. "Is this the way you care for the man who is to build my ship?" he exploded. "A week more, my fine navigator, and he might as well be back in the element from which he came. Have him loosed immediately, given cleaner quarters and water to wash away the filth. He is to have fresh air and better food."

"But, Excellency," Lucas interposed, "this Englishman is a pirate—a—"

"Pirate or not. You have said that he was a shipbuilder. We searched France for such a one—from end to end—only to find them all in Holland or in the service of the Muscovite Peter. Providence throws one at us from off the sea —and you starve him to death. We are nearing the end of our voyage. This man is in no condition to build anything, not even a coffin for himself. He is to have better care from now on."

An hour later my shackles were removed and I was taken to a small cabin aft where I was chained up again. But I had light, air, and some view of the sea through a small port. Nor was that all. The first food given me in my new quarters included meat and a pint of red wine. Within a few days life was again pulsing through my veins—and a great curiosity was on me as to the task the seigneur had alluded to. I was to build a ship!

There came a day when, through a sea dotted with masses of floating ice, we arrived at the mouth of a great river or an estuary. The north shore, the only one I could see, was several leagues distant. But day after day as we sailed westward the shore came nearer and nearer. Reckoning the time as well as I could, and the direction, I felt that the shore must be a part of North America.

How I wished now that I had applied myself more to geography when I was at Tiverton school and less to fisticuffs. I was ignorant of the Americas. All that I knew I had picked up haphazard in our Bristol shipyard from the accounts of shipmates who had been there. The Americas were vague places—the Spanish Main, the isles of the West Indies, Virginia, New York and Hendrick Hudson's Land. Somewhere in the latter region was New France. More than this I did not know.

Several days passed. Then one dawn I heard orders on deck, the creak of blocks, the slap of canvas being furled, the splash of anchors and the discharge of a gun. Straining at my chains I gazed through the port. On the shore of the river was a town of size, partly on a high bluff, partly on low land. There were quays. There were warehouses and other buildings.

A boat came from the shore, passing by my port. It contained several men, one, a fat jolly-faced fellow in a hood and cassock, a friar of some sort. It passed from my view but I heard cries of welcome from the poop.

Lucas did not come as was his wont, nor would the sailor who brought my food tell me anything. I was alive with curiosity.

At last, on the evening of the fourth day after our arrival Lucas and several sailors came and unshackled me.

"On deck, Englishman," he ordered me, prodding me with the point of his rapier. "If you misbehave or try to escape I shall take great pleasure in letting daylight through you!"

"My friend," I returned, "a cutlass would be more to your hand than that long toadsticker, and when I escape it will be with knowledge that I have finished a job left undone at Cadiz! Lead on."

Along with a dozen others I went over the side, down a rope ladder, into a queerly shaped craft, something like the canoas in the Gulf of Persia, already laden to the gunwales with gear of all sorts. And for the first time in my life I had sight of the savages of North America. The paddlers of the canoa were feather-bedecked, copper-skinned men who waited patiently for the word to shove off. In the stern, beside Anton Lucas, was the jolly-faced friar I had seen come out to the ship on the day of our arrival.

THE canoa headed westward. I listened intently to the conversation of the white men. Bit by bit some of the story unrolled. The town we had just left was Quebec, and the river we were now on was the St. Lawrence. Lucas, a braggart if there ever was one, did most of the talking, but the little priest, Father Louis Hennepin, did get in a few words now and then, and those few words gave me a disjointed idea of the faring.

The seigneur was one LaSalle, who had great landholdings in New France. Many leagues to the west, up the St. Lawrence River, were five great freshwater oceans in which that river rose. It was also thought that another river flowed west from the same seas to the Vermilion Sea, a body of water that lapped the shores of Japan, Cathay and the Spice Islands. If this were true it would be a trade route that would enrich France and LaSalle. Also, on the shores of the freshwater seas were many savages, expert in the trapping of fur animals, and French trading posts to trade in rich peltries had recently been established at places far from Quebec. The task LaSalle had set himself was to ascend the St. Lawrence, guided by Hennepin who had been in the country as a missionary, to the inland seas and there build a ship which could be navigated thereon, to explore and to exploit the rich fur trade.

Lucas by some hook or crook had ingratiated himself with LaSalle in France and had been selected as the ship's navigator, although he had never been to America. The gear carried in our canoa was ship's gear, hardware, canvas, and such, and somewhere behind us, at Quebec, or now on the river, were similarly laden canoas and the other members of the expedition.

After several days and a traverse of fifty leagues we landed at the quay of a thriving village, Montreal, where still keeping my eyes and ears open, I learned that LaSalle had a vast seigneury of land worked by friars and Indians.

Our stay here was short, only long enough to replenish food supplies, and once again we pushed up the river. I had wondered why LaSalle intended to build a vessel above. This river was broad, the current easy, and the draught enough to float the largest of ships. Why not sail a vessel from saltwater to the inland seas? A league west of Montreal I had the answer, a terrific rapids which no craft, not even a canoa, could hope to ascend. Nor was that the only one. In the next fifty leagues there were seven separate cataracts over which the river cascaded in foamy torrents and tumultuous whirlpools. At each of these we landed and carried our canoa for miles, which, with its heavy lading was no easy matter. Even the little priest took his turn at tumpline and towrope.

After the last rapid we paddled another twenty-five leagues and one evening we pulled out of the river onto a great blue sea with no land beyond it. Before dark we had drawn up on a beach under the guns of a fort, Fort Frontenac, the most western of LaSalle's holdings, and men, women, children, dogs and Indians were making us a noisy welcome. Moored to a wharf were two smallish vessels, barges rather, with rigging that might carry lugsails.

Although Father Hennepin had treated me kindly on the long journey from Quebec, the attitude of Lucas had not changed. It seemed that we were to wait at Fort Frontenac for the rest of the party, and that the wait might be a long one, because we had no sooner landed than Lucas ordered me shackled.

The priest protested. "It is not necessary to chain this man."

"He may escape, Father"—Lucas motioned the men to go ahead—"and for that I would be answerable to LaSalle. So far as I know this Englishman is the only shipbuilder in New France."

"Escape to where?" The priest waved an arm. "Look, my son, there is nothing about us for hundreds of leagues except wilderness—and that wilderness full of savages. The British colony of New York might as well be on the moon if this man thought to make his way there!"

The Dane shook his head. "With due respect to you, Father, the Englishman is my responsibility, and chained he shall be."

The priest shrugged his shoulders—

Lucas was in command. So once again I paced a five-foot radius in a storeroom at Fort Frontenac, waiting for what I knew not.

IT was now November and the scents of autumn, the rustle of falling leaves which I could smell and hear through the barred windows of my prison gave me an acute nostalgia, made me long for the England of the old days, a longing which must forever remain just that.

There was a bustle of noise one morning, the bark of dogs, the firing of cannon and the splash of paddles. I could see nothing, but I surmised that LaSalle and the remainder of the expedition had arrived at Frontenac. And so it proved; but for some time I was to remain in confinement. In fact, it was December and snow lay on the ground before my shackles were knocked off once more, and together with a score of men I went aboard one of the luggers at the quay.

She had been prepared for a long voyage, judging from the stores and gear heaped on her deck, including six culverins. Just before the mooring ropes were cast off LaSalle came aboard with the one-armed man, who was, I learned later, an Italian soldier of fortune, Henri Tonti.

Dane Lucas made a brave show in seaboots and greatcoat, his long rapier fouling his legs as he paced the small poop. There was some confusion. LaSalle and Tonti argued, and again and again the course was changed, bearing more southerly with each change. I didn't know then that the voyage was over entirely uncharted waters, seas which had never before been sailed on. Heretofore, the navigations of the two luggers had been confined to the waters between Fort Frontenac and the upper rapids of the St. Lawrence.

The object of our voyage was to locate a site for a shipyard, but it was necessary to get permission from the savages who lived on the south shore. It was their town, the whereabouts of which was only vaguely known, that the lugger was headed for. Meanwhile the other lugger under the command of Father Hennepin had sailed west, and a common rendezvous for both craft had been tentatively set.

Our vessel was small, about fifteen tons, ill-built by men who were no craftsmen, probably house-carpenters, and laden and overcrowded, she became unseaworthy. The wind became a gale and toward morning the weather turned zero-cold. Seas which we continually shipped turned to ice and the lugger was down by the head so much that I feared she would sink. Had I escaped Charles and Louis in Europe, only to perish in a freshwater ocean in North America?

We made a landfall at daybreak, a long line of booming surf that offered no haven. The wind howled and the ice on the rigging and deck grew heavier. Miserable and half-frozen as I was, I exulted in the discomfiture of Anton Lucas. The Dane was cowed by seas of a sort he'd never before experienced.

When it appeared almost certain that the vessel would founder and I was eyeing the shoreline and debating the chance of swimming to it, a cleft appeared in the mouth of the surf, a river. Lucas pulled himself together, bawled orders and we skimmed into shelter over immense combers and anchored a league upstream.

It was bitterly cold and a snow-laden wind blew furiously from the north, flinging its gusts savagely at the naked forest; still it was a thousand times better than being on that fierce freshwater sea.

The next day LaSalle and Tonti went in search of the Indian town, leaving Lucas in command. Once again the Dane showed that he was out of his environment. A handful of curious savages came to see what manner of craft the lugger was, and Lucas, thinking them a war-party, put to sea in the face of the still raging gale.

We cleared the mouth of the river, but could not claw off the shore. The drift carried us into the surf where the lugger struck hard. The mast and rigging went by the board. The next moment the huge seas were broaching her—beating her into a total wreck. Luckily the beach was sandy and we all came ashore with nothing worse than a wetting,

which was bad enough in that weather. Three days and nights we camped, shivering and miserable, waiting the return of LaSalle.

IT was a crestfallen Dane who reported the loss to the seigneur; it was a stunned LaSalle who received the report. The lugger's cargo had been materials for the new ship, and that cargo now littered the beach in all directions. LaSalle gave orders to salvage whatever could be saved, and for several days we toiled on the beach and in the frigid surf. After prodigious labor there was piled beyond reach of the angry sea the six pieces of artillery, a few bales of sail-canvas, a length of chain-cable and some divers hardware. These, together with materials from Father Hennepin's lugger, and materials improvised from the forest would have to suffice for the new ship.

After the materials had been salvaged we marched west to the appointed meeting place with Father Hennepin, and after a traverse of thirty leagues we reached the mouth of a huge river, where to the delight of everybody the priest's lugger was moored. That night, for the first time since leaving Fort Frontenac, we slept in warmth and with filled bellies.

The next morning the men were divided into two parties. One party returned to the wreck to bring forward

La Salle unrolled a parchment. "I have here the plans of a ship, Englishman. Can you build it?"

the salvaged materials, the other, with which I was, went forward laden with gear from Hennepin's vessel, toward the site of the shipyard already selected by the priest.

Again I wondered why materials had to be portaged. Why not sail the lugger upstream? I soon had the answer. For on this traverse was the greatest cataract* in the world, because of which no ship, unless it had wings, could ascend from the Lake of the Ontarios to the upper freshwater seas. Leagues before we came to it the roar of falling water could be heard, louder and louder as we approached, till finally the great volume of sound completely drowned out everything else.

From a summit of a small rise we saw it, a great expanse of water pouring over the edge of a mountain, a wooded island situated in the center of the very brink of the falls.

Two leagues above the cataract, at the mouth of a small creek where the river was tranquil we came to the shipyard site. Packs were tumbled on the ground and we set to work with saw and axe.

Here we were destined to stay for months. Before nightfall huts had been built and firewood collected. And despite Lucas, for the first time since arriving in New France, I was treated, not as a captive Englishman, but as a member of the expedition.

I now fully appreciated Father Hennepin's remarks at Fort Frontenac when he had asked Lucas to where might I escape! In that wilderness I would have been lost. But I was keeping eyes and ears open. Bit by bit the topography of the land was unfolding. To the south or southeast, two hundred, five hundred, perhaps a thousand leagues, were British colonies.

Further to the south or the southwest were the lands claimed by Spain. But in between, a barrier of fierce savages, ruthless no less than Charles of England and Louis of France.

Within a week the materials from both luggers were assembled and LaSalle sent for me.

*Niagara Falls.

III

It's hey for the seas that are fresh, me lads,
And ho for unknown lands-o,
The Englishman if his neck would save,
Must turn to an early skill-o,
But he bides the day that shall be his,
To even up the score-o,
For nineteen messmates shot and drowned,
And Lucas sent to hell-o.

"VERY well, Englishman," the seigneur said, "your job begins now. We shall soon see if our mercy was wise. I have here," he unrolled a parchment, "the plans of a ship!" He spread it out and motioned for me to look at it. "Can you build it?"

There is some difference in French and English ship nomenclature, and I asked the seigneur to clear up a few points. He did. The plan called for a two-masted caravel of about sixty tons burthen, a common enough craft in European waters, and many a one had we turned out in our Bristol yards. Her hull seemed over-large for the rig, she would be slow, but her broad beam would make for ample cargo stowage and seaworthiness. The design was staunch if good craftsmanship be put into her.

"I can build the ship, Sieur LaSalle," I told him, "but I am not sure that I

"How now?" he spoke sharply. "Don't trifle, Englishman!"

"I shall not touch timber, sir, except under certain conditions. You have but to give the word to string me up to a tree, but that won't build you a ship. I know from yours and master Lucas' lips that there are no shipbuilders in New France, and that, messire, means that this expedition will come to an end right here unless you comply with my conditions. From what I have heard of the fierce gales which sweep those upper seas, tubs such as we crossed the Lake of the Ontarios in wouldn't hold together for fifty leagues in those waters. So I make bold to inquire as to what plans you have for me after I build your ship? Am I to be returned to France to hang, am I to be hanged here in New France, or sent to England to hang?"

Father Hennepin chuckled. "The lad drives a stern bargain, messire."

LaSalle pondered. "To tell the truth, I hadn't thought of what should be done with you. But it can be arranged. Do as I bid and a full pardon shall be forthcoming from France. Is that to your satisfaction?"

"I want no pardon from Louis," I returned, "but I do want to be set free when your need of me is gone—"

Anton Lucas sprang forward, half-drawing his rapier. "Excellency," he cried, "I protest—"

"There is one thing more," I interrupted, glaring hard at the Dane, "and that is, that I be allowed the same privileges as any other member of this party, and be allowed to exercise those privileges in the manner of a free man. There is a dog of a Dane here who has heaped insult and injury on me for the past four months. In the future he shall answer to me and should he again foul my course—"

Lucas ripped out an oath, jerked the rapier free and drove at me. I had had the blade in my gullet, too, had not Father Hennepin tripped him neatly. The rapier flew from his hand and went clattering.

"By the Holy!" LaSalle shouted, his face purple with rage. "You go too far, Englishman. I promised you freedom. I shall keep that promise. But Master Lucas is my sailing master, and I won't have him insulted. Keep a civil tongue in your head."

"That I shall do, messire, and I shall expect civil treatment from Lucas." Then feeling that I had won my points I bowed. "I am ready to begin work on the caravel!"

I HAD my pick of the men, and I selected those who could use saw, axe and adze. In four days I had the keel, hewn from a tall, dead, though still standing white oak, on the ways. LaSalle seemed pleased, though he said little. Father Hennepin gave it a papist christening and LaSalle suggested that the priest drive the king-bolt. Hennepin declined, saying that that honor should be given to the leader. LaSalle took the maul, gave the bolt a lusty blow, driving it deep into the wood, after which ceremonies I was left with my helpers to continue.

The ribs and knees were adzed from green white oak. Although the sap was down the timber would be over-heavy till it dried out. While not comparable to kiln-dried timber it was a strong and tough wood and would do well because I made allowances for shrinkage as the wood seasoned. The sheathing we whipsawed from dead standing pine, straight-grained and tough, every bit as good as sheathing-timber from Norway and Sweden.

And so, on the shores of an unknown river in North America, I, John Harkness, fugitive sea-rover, built a ship of divers materials. As she took shape on the stocks I was prideful of my craft. It is one thing to build a ship in a yard where for the asking there are proper timbers, cordage, canvas, hardware and skilled helpers. It is another thing to build a ship as I built this one. My father had taught me all the tricks of the trade. Aye, at heart I was a shipbuilder, and a shipbuilder I would have been in England today had it not been for the accursed Stuarts.

There are always intrigues of a sort amongst the great, the well-born. Common men do their day-by-day work, but the nobles, the well-to-do, the clericals, must scheme and plot about this and that. I had little intercourse with LaSalle, nevertheless I was conscious of an air of brooding he carried with him. There was intrigue somewhere. This feeling grew stronger after the arrival of a courier in February who came overland north of the Lake of the Ontarios from Frontenac. His feet were frostbitten and for several months he hobbled about the camp, a fox-eyed, swart little Corsican, poking his nose into all manner of things. A day or so after his arrival I noticed that LaSalle did not come to the stocks as usual. Then it was noised about that he had returned to Frontenac. Which made no difference to me. I had a ship to build.

Within two months both masts were stepped and I had started cutting sailcloth. Henri Tonti drew a design for a figure-head, a winged griffon, the device of Count Frontenac, Governor-General

of New France. I set one of the men who showed an aptitude for woodcarving at the work, and before the launch the cleverly contrived device had been mortised to the stem.

The courier with the frosted feet, Jean Lereaux, spent most of his time in company with Anton Lucas. Time hung heavy on the hands of the navigator. He dared not come near me, or I had taken a handspike to him. He would not hunt venison because of the cold weather, nor yet, because of his rank, turn a hand to camp work. Even the one-armed Tonti put in a turn at chopping wood, and always the Italian was on the go, hunting, giving me advice as to the mounting of the ordnance, treating with the Indians who now made our camp a rendezvous, and other tasks. A gallant shipmate for any brave man, that one-armed soldier.

IN March two Dutchmen, traders from New York Colony who were staying the winter at a Seneca village some miles away, got word of our shipbuilding and visited us. Tonti welcomed them cordially and they had the run of the camp. As for myself, I liked these Dutchmen little when they became friendly with Anton Lucas. Birds of a feather flock together. And much as I wanted information of the colony, the distance, the direction, the savage lands to be traversed, I steered clear of the traders.

One evening I had returned to the ways to check a discrepancy between plan and construction. I started to climb aboard the hull when the low buzz of conversation reached my ears. I recognized the voice of Lucas. It is not my way to spy, but I was puzzled. Who was with him? I tiptoed through the soft snow to the overhang of the stern where the voices were coming from. Seated on the blocks were four men, the two Dutch traders, Anton Lucas and Jean Lereaux. They had no thought of an eavesdropper and were in deep conversation. A bargain of some sort was being negotiated. I caught only the conclusion.

"Then it is agreed," said one of the Dutchmen to Lucas, "that Lereaux shall stay in the Seneca village? He will arrange for a runner to Fort Orange. And a share each for Van Dietrich and myself, a share each for you and Lereaux. As for the men you will need, we will leave that up to you. You should be able to solve that!"

Lucas chuckled. "Four shares in a hundred thousand francs is twenty-five thousand each. Not a great sum, but a tidy one. A man could do things with it in New York where I understand gentlemen from the sea are in high regard with the merchants. It will go a long way to outfitting a venture. Leave it to me, gentlemen, there will be only four shares. There is one unsettled point, however. I don't know for certain what LaSalle's plans are. I doubt if even he knows. If the lading is insignificant then we must wait for another voyage."

"If no runner comes to Fort Orange this year we shall come back here at the beginning of the new year," the Dutchman replied. "By that time you should be fully acquainted with LaSalle's intentions. Then we can plan anew. And now, master Lucas, we're off. I like not the insolent stare of your English shipbuilder. And the Italian may smell a rat if we stay longer."

Lucas swore a foul oath. "The Englishman is why I make this pact with you. Sieur LaSalle has not kept faith with me. The Englishman was mine, but the score shall be settled!"

They passed me, so near that their garments almost touched me as I drew tight against the hull.

Lucas was up to his old tricks. He could be loyal to no cause, no leader. I didn't grasp the full significance of the plot, because I was not in possession of all the facts. I only knew that after the vessel was launched it was to sail to the upper seas for exploration and trading. When she would return to Niagara and with what cargo was unknown to me. But Lucas was in LaSalle's confidence, and he had made an agreement of some sort that sounded like betrayal of the seigneur.

I thought of acquainting Tonti with what I had heard. But why should I? I had no more love of the French than

I had of the Stuarts. LaSalle had not saved my life out of philanthropy. Had he had no use of me I would be at the bottom of the Bay of Biscay. And I still had a score to settle on the account of old Jem Frye and his shipmates. Let the Dane plot as he would, I would bide my time against a full settlement.

The next morning the Dutchmen were gone. The expression on Lucas' face was that of a cat about to get into a cream crock.

TONTI, Father Hennepin and a few men were off on a deer-hunt, leaving Lucas in command. Indians, both Senecas and Eries, made the camp a rendezvous, watching curiously the progress of the vessel on the stocks. It was beyond their ken that such a large canoa could be built. The savages made nuisances of themselves in divers ways, usually by trifling and petty thefts. LaSalle had ordered that no reprisals were to be taken against the Indians—and naturally the men were heartily sick of our unwanted visitors.

The savages were troublesome at the smithy where the heating and fashioning of metals seemed to have a fascination for them. They crowded about the forge till the smith could hardly do his work. The smith, a surly Norman, had forged a number of iron rings for the rigging, of a size, the span of a man's wrist. A young brave picked up one, slipped it over his hand, and lo and behold, it became a bracelet, a desired ornament. There was a scramble for the other rings, braves tumbling over each other, snatching, grabbing, and in an instant the entire supply of rings had been transferred to coppery arms.

The smith yelled for help, and grabbing a white-hot iron from the forge, brandished it at the pilferers. The Indians fled, laughing goodnaturedly, taking the whole affair as a joke.

The tumult drew everybody in camp, including myself and my helpers. Lucas came running, his long rapier banging against his legs. A young brave, a lad of about sixteen, with a dignified air, refused to run. He became the object of the smith's wrath.

A circle of angry Frenchmen surrounded the two, calling out to the smith to teach the young thief a lesson.

The smith advanced toward the boy, holding the hot iron before him. That the youngster was frightened needed no second glance. His eyes, soft and brown, startled as a red deer's, glanced anxiously around, but everywhere only the angry faces of the Frenchmen met his gaze.

The lad backed away slowly, his eye on the hot metal. The spectators hemmed him in. Forced to the edge of the circle he was pushed back—toward the iron. But the lesson lagged for Dane Lucas—a man of action. And the iron was cooling.

With the pommel of his sword the Dane knocked the Indian spinning. In an instant he was astride the prone victim, calling on the smith to apply the iron.

"On the forehead and the cheeks! We'll teach these swine a lesson they won't forget!"

Had the victim been a man I wouldn't have interfered. Branding is a vile punishment, but together with cropping it is a legal and judicious custom in the Stuarts' England. But I could not see a mere lad treated thus. Moreover, he had not stolen any of the rings. His arms were quite bare.

With a swing of my wooden handspike I knocked the iron from the smith's hand. The next moment I had Dane Lucas by the scruff of the neck. I jerked him off his victim. There was a fierce clamor from the frustrated Frenchmen. "Brand the Englishman—give him the iron!"

Had I waited, knives which I saw drawn might have cut me to ribbons; the French temper flares hot. But I had looked on naked steel too often. With another swipe of my handspike I knocked the rapier from Lucas' hand and stood on it.

"I'll brain the first man who makes a move!" I shouted. "You know the strict orders to overlook anything the Indians do. Brand this lad and a thousand savages will be down on us before nightfall —and our scalps on hoops by morning. I'll answer to Tonti for what I've done

here, but to nobody else. Now back to work! Back before I take club to the lot of you!"

Grumbling, the men dispersed. They knew I was right. I picked up Lucas' rapier and thrust the naked blade under my belt. "I think it needs a more decisive master," I told the Dane. "Furthermore, it is the weapon of a gentleman, and not to be carried by a rascally cutthroat. You may have it back when you have the courage to take it!"

"When I take it back, Englishman," he gritted, "I'll cut your heart out with it!"

We had no more trouble with the Indians, but Tonti, whom I acquainted with what had happened, took no chances. From that time on a well-armed guard was maintained in and about the camp and stockyard.

A WEEK later a dozen Indians, profusely bedecked in feather-ornamented bonnets, guided by the boy I had saved, came to the stockyard. They were led by a tall man, a notable of some sort from the deference accorded him by his escort. From his features he was either the father or the uncle of the lad. The band paused near the stocks, the boy pointed to me and there ensued a conversation in their peculiar gutturals. The chieftan stepped out and addressed me. I couldn't understand his tongue, but his meaning was clear. He was thanking me. Then from a leathern pouch he took a belt of beads strung in curious pattern on leather and placed it in my hands. Stepping back he saluted with upraised arm, stood poised a moment, wheeled and strode off toward the forest followed by his retainers. Only the boy turned to glance back. I waved at him in a friendly fashion. He waved in return, then the forest swallowed up the little band.

The belt, strongly made of well-tanned hide, I placed about my middle over Anton Lucas' rapier. I had need of it. My own leathern sash had seen much hard wear—and the rats had gnawed it while I was chained in that dirty forepeak. It was frayed beyond repair.

April came, but still LaSalle had not returned. Intrigues, the intrigues of Jesuit and Sulpitian, the two orders of Friars in New France, which were at swords' points with each other, the intrigues of nobles and the Governor-General at Montreal and Quebec, jealous and suspicious of each other and LaSalle, had to do with the seigneur's continued absence, so I gathered from stray snatches of conversation overheard between Tonti and Father Hennepin. There were rumours that LaSalle's creditors, urged on by the Jesuits, had seized all his properties along the St. Lawrence, and that the expedition would be abandoned, that it would return to Fort Frontenac.

But these were lost on me. My task was to finish the ship. She was now ready for the launch when the ice was out of the river. There came a warm rain in April and all night the great river creaked and groaned. At daylight, with many loud roars, the ice let loose its hold on the banks and swept downstream toward the cataract, breaking, crumbling, disintegrating. And on that day we launched the caravel.

Father Hennepin blessed her and named her *Le Griffon* because of her figurehead. The company sang *Te Deum,* cannon were fired and I ordered the wedges knocked out. Over runways well greased with bears' fat she slid into the water with a great splash, rocked violently—and then settled down on an even keel within an inch of my calculated waterline.

I completed the rig within the next month, and from then until August we loitered and loafed in a pleasant clime with little else to do but eat and sleep. *Le Griffon* was ready to sail—we waited only for our leader. But even eating and sleeping becomes wearisome, and as week after week and month after month passed with no news of LaSalle, the men started to grumble. We would be buried in the wilderness another year unless the seigneur came soon. The upper seas congealed with ice in the winter and if the voyage were not made within the next two or three months it could not be made that year.

LaSalle came in the first week of August, austere, cold, the marks of strain

in his face. A half-hour later came word to up anchor. We were to sail at last.

The current in the river being strong we had to use towline for more than a league, then we plowed into the Lake of the Eries, the hawser was brought inboard and we raised our new canvas. With a spanking breeze *Le Griffon* headed westward over waters which had never before known sail. One man had not sailed with us. He could not be found. Jean Lereaux, the courier from Fort Frontenac.

IV

Yo-ho, let the wind blow,
Let it blow up the Lake of the Eries-o,
Let it blow west, let it blow north,
Let it blow up the Lake of the Hurons-o.
The Dane's plot will come to naught,
And the Frenchman's plans will fail-o.

A HUNDRED leagues south by west over the Lake of the Eries we sailed, through uncharted waters which, according to rumours, were full of treacherous reefs, whirlpools and monsters, but none of these did we encounter. On the fourth day after leaving the Niagara we arrived at the mouth of a broad river, but could not beat into it because of adverse winds, *Le Griffon,* after the manner of all caravels, not being a good sailer closehauled. This river was called the *Straits** by LaSalle, being the connecting link between the Lake of the Eries and the Lake of the Hurons. LaSalle had navigated it several years before in a small canoa.

After a day at anchor a brisk southerly came up and we stood cautiously into the river, and finally into a small lake which Father Hennepin named Lake St. Claire, shallow and much given to seaweed. With the lead going we crossed this lake and into a broad clear channel of ample depth which led to the Lake of the Hurons. At the lip of that sea the current was strong and again towlines went over the bow to warp the ship through. From conversation overheard I understood that the French trading-post of Michilimackinac, our first port of call, was two hundred leagues distant to the north and west. At this port and at other places were retainers of LaSalle, who had been sent into the country one or two years previous by canoa flotilla to trade with the Indians and collect peltries. It was assumed that these men had carried out their tasks and that rich stores of furs were waiting our arrival.

The time of *Le Griffon's* return voyage, however, would depend on the amount of cargo and the expediency with which it could be picked up. LaSalle had had no word of the men and he was ignorant of the exact location of the fur depots. Complete information was expected at Michilimackinac.

The peaceful quiet of the great Lake of the Hurons was deceiving. After lying becalmed for two days among some islands on the west coast a furious gale broke. So sudden did it come that we had hardly time to reef down. I had the same feeling I had experienced on the Lake of the Ontarios. I had escaped Charles, Louis, musket-ball, dagger and cutlass in my time. I had bought life from LaSalle with my craftsmanship, only to lose it, of all places, in a roaring tempest in a freshwater ocean of North America.

The Latin, whether he is Spaniard, Italian, French or Corsican, has a curious temperament. He will face great odds bravely, culverin, cutlass, pistol, boarding-pike, and many a time have I witnessed such a facing. But with nature in an ugly mood, then he is something else. He must down on his knees and implore the pantheon of saints for intercession. So it was in the great gale that drove down on us in the Lake of the Hurons. This I expected in the Frenchmen. But not in Dane Lucas. He came of a seafaring race. But he was the greatest coward of all. Gray of face, his heart and hands stained with a thousand crimes, he too was on his knees. And from every side, above the roar of wind and the crash of seas, came cries to a certain St. Anthony beseeching delivery.

I have no quarrel with honest prayer, but I rather put my trust in good timber and well-caulked seams. *Le Griffon*

*Detroit

had both. That gale was her test. Scudding north we raced. I had been in a typhoon once in the Indian Ocean yet never have I witnessed a greater fury of wind and water. For twenty-four hours we were fiercely buffeted, and LaSalle, at my advice, ordered the making of a sea-anchor of the spars and tophamper and riding out the gale lest we be hurled onto a lee-shore now looming to starboard. But almost as suddenly as it began, the storm subsided, the sun broke through the clouds and the seas began to ease. The crew, now that its prayers had been answered, became normally profane, and Lucas swaggered as usual.

After a voyage of seven hundred English miles from the Niagara River we arrived off the port of Michilimackinac and dropped anchor. In a short time we were surrounded by a fleet of canoas containing Indians and many friars. Attired in a scarlet cloak and a plumed hat LaSalle went ashore to check up on his retainers and the whereabouts of the fur depots.

For a week we lay at Michilimackinac lading peltries brought off in canoas, then on the first of September we again weighed and sailed south into yet another freshwater ocean, the Lake of the Michigans, and after a voyage of forty leagues entered a large bay where there was another fur depot. Here, a great treasure trove of pelts had been collected. LaSalle was jubilant. So was Lucas! The Dane's eyes sparkled every time a bale was hove over the side.

Only after such a rich lading did LaSalle decide to send the ship back to the Niagara. Had the fur collection been small we would have wintered in the bay, but now *Le Griffon* would return, discharge cargo, winter on the Niagara and come back to the Lake of the Michigans in the spring. To Anton Lucas was given the command of the ship for that rich argosy, to Lucas and five seamen.

The plot the Dane had hatched with the Dutchmen was now clear to me. The rich peltries under hatches would never enrich the French seigneur, would never see Quebec. Lereaux was in an Indian town somewhere near Niagara to which the ship's lading would be taken, then the Dutchmen in New York notified, after which the furs would be taken into the English province and sold. The five sailors who would accompany Lucas were as good as dead. They would be disposed of by the Dane after his need of them was gone.

But it was not like Lucas to go without settling his account with me. Hate smoldered in his eyes whenever he came near me. Nor was it my intention that he should go without a settlement. The world was too small for both of us. One would have to depart from it. When *Le Griffon* hove anchor she would have one stowaway—or so I planned.

But Lucas also planned. I was the first man he selected to return with him, and the seigneur thought, if indeed he thought at all, that our enmity was at an end, and interposed no objections.

"Not because I like your company, Englishman," Lucas told me privately, "but because you are a good sailor, and I must have a capable seaman with so few men. Besides"—his eye dropped to the naked rapier under my beaded leathern sash—"I want my sword back. It will be in my belt when we reach the Niagara!"

"Then I'll be in freshwater Davy Jones' locker, master Lucas, deader than a mackerel, and you can lay to that!"

"Perhaps"—he grinned evilly—"every dog has his day and my day is overdue!"

That evening Lucas was closeted with LaSalle, receiving last orders. On the next morning we weighed, fired a salute from the after-swivel and pointed the winged griffon at Michilimackinac. With a good norther pooping us we passed that port at dusk, changed our course to southeast and drove down the Lake of the Hurons. I was at the helm and again and again I saw Lucas leering at me as he paced the quarterdeck. I would have to be on my guard constantly or Lucas would make good his boast.

THE eastern passage of the Lake of the Hurons was swift. We traversed the Lake of St. Claire, the River of the Straits and entered the Lake of the Eries. A little more than a hundred leagues lay

between us and the Niagara River, and with a good wind filling our courses those leagues would be eaten up in no time. I had no plans other than that in some manner I must balk Lucas and turn to my own account the wealth below hatches.

The men Lucas had selected to go with him were well-chosen, the offscourings of La Rochelle waterfront, ready to cut a throat for a farthing, but by the same token ready to cut his, should it be to their profit, and it was on such a tack that I set my own course.

I had Lucas' rapier, but the Dane now wore a brace of pistols, and there were the heavy sheath-knives of the sailors. It was apparent that Lucas had won the men, probably months back, and it was also evidenced by their attitude toward me that I was destined to feed the freshwater fishes just as soon as I was no longer needed in the working of the ship.

I made shift to load the after-swivel, and I saw to it that the priming remained fresh and dry. In case I were rushed I could get my back to the rail and let them have the half-pint of balls it contained, and then have it out with the blade with whomever remained. But first I must try diplomacy.

I was at the helm. Running free *Le Griffon* plowed east and north, a creamy frothing under her stern.

"And your share of the loot, what will you do with it?" I asked Peter Gudneau, a one-eyed ruffian out of Marseilles who stood near.

He licked a lip and eyed me speculatively. "I had not thought that you knew," he retorted. "Oh, well, never mind. Master Lucas says that New York town has many entertainments for sailors, that the women and wine are excellent. I'll spend mine that way."

"And after it's gone?"

"There's always the sea."

"You know what will happen to you if you ever fall into French hands?"

"Aye," he nodded, "but what of it? We all have to die. A short life and a merry one, say I."

"It won't be merry for you, Peter Gudneau. Lucas has other plans. After his need of you is gone, this—" And I drew my finger across my throat. "You and your mates will do the work, Lucas will take the pay. I know. I was shipmates with Lucas before. And I heard him plot last winter with the Dutchmen from Fort Orange—a plot that means death for you, Peter Gudneau!"

"Mother of God! You wouldn't lie, Englishman?" His swarthy face purpled.

"I speak truth. Tell your shipmates what I have said. Then ask Lucas about the plans made of a winter evening in the shipyard."

"We are four, he is one," Gudneau said, swallowing hard.

"You forget the Dutchmen and the Indians."

I had not thought to bring things to a head so soon, but Peter Gudneau stamped away muttering. Five minutes later he was back and with him were the other three sailors.

"We would all hear what Lucas said to the Dutchmen," Gudneau said, "then we shall know what to do."

I repeated the story. "And believe me, brothers," I continued, "it wouldn't be the first time Lucas betrayed his shipmates. There was a galley in the harbor of Cartagena—"

I got no further. I heard a pistol clicking to cock. There was a shadow in the companion leading into the cabin, an evil grinning shadow, Anton Lucas. He held the pistol at my head.

"We'll be in the Niagara tomorrow, Englishman," he said. "You are no longer needed; and you are overdue at that place you foolish Britons call Davy Jones' locker. And you have company, too, if any man here take stock in your tale!" He looked hard at the four men. "Fools! Can't you see that he is a trouble-maker? Believe him and I promise that you shall never see New York, its taverns, its women, its entertainments which are the talk of the Americas. And now, Englishman, I'll take my sword!"

There was no time to shrink, to dodge, to get out of the way. The pistol was pointed at my head. I saw the flint fall, heard the grate of stone on metal. Then Anton Lucas cursed and threw the piece on deck. It had missed fire. He snatched the other from his belt. This one didn't

Aye, I had returned the blade and he had taken it to hell with him.

miss fire. The ball droned by my head like an angry bee. But it hadn't been Lucas' aim, he was a good marksman, for even as he grabbed at the second pistol I had jerked the rapier free of its scabbard and flung it as one would fling a spear—with all my strength. The point caught him in the chest—just as he pulled the trigger—ran right through and came out the back. He fell writhing on the deck. But life is full in men of the sea, be they a Lucas or an honorable man. The Dane got to his feet, stumbled blindly, pawing at the rapier's hilt close against his breastbone. I had let go the helm and *Le Griffon* swung off with flapping canvas, slipping into the trough. She rolled heavily. Lucas ran to the rail in his blindness, toppled over, and we heard the splash. Aye, I had returned the blade and he had taken it to hell with him.

I PICKED up both pistols, thrust them under my sash and put the vessel on her course. I motioned for Gudneau and his mates to come near.

"Brothers," I said, "it is customary among seamen of fortune to elect a new captain when misadventure happen to the old one. I stand for the berth, and I promise that if elected to treat you fairly according to the rules. What say you?"

"We would know your plans," Gudneau said.

"I have none. I have not been in the seigneur's confidence, but I believe a canoa flotilla waits at Niagara to bear away to Fort Frontenac the cargo beneath our hatches. We can go on to Niagara and anchor and wait. You are French and that would be the manner of a service faithful to LaSalle. However, you forswore that service when you agreed to aid Lucas. As for me, an Englishman, not here by my own free will, I am under promise to no man. I look to my own benefit. We can search for the Indian town where Lereaux is hidden, and tell him we are ready to carry out the bargain Lucas made with the Dutchmen—and trust to luck that it will be fulfilled. That course will be full of peril and no doubt we will be tomahawked. We are not men of the woods and we know little of the lay of the country. The Dutchmen and Indians will have us at their mercy. Now, there is another course, and I recommend it to you. You mind the landlocked harbor* on the south coast fifty leagues west of Niagara? I noted it as we sailed by. We can put in there and avoid French, Dutch, and with luck, even the Indians. We have ample food aboard and there should be plenty of game in the forest. This winter or perhaps even before snow flies, we can spy out the land and see if a way cannot be found to the English or Spanish colonies with our ship and cargo. I have heard of rivers flowing south and west and we may find such a one. Share and share alike of what we have will be twenty or thirty thousand francs each. And maybe we have sale of the vessel too."

I thus appealed to their strongest instincts, cupidity, and they hesitated little in deciding.

"I like the way this Englishman talks," Gudneau said. "I vote that we make him captain, and that we go to the harbor on the south coast."

The other three voiced agreement.

"Lay onto the braces then," I shouted, "we're wearing ship."

That evening before sundown we beat through a quarter-mile strait into a wide placid lagoon large enough to shelter all the navies of the world. Our anchor went down a hundred fathoms off shore, a shore fringed with white birch and fir, a lonesome and melancholy shore with its stark white trunks and untrod strand.

Once more I was a rover, a gentleman of the sea, but my element was not saltwater. It was a freshwater ocean in a remote part of a strange new world. What lay ahead no man could say. There would be a vengeful LaSalle. Every Frenchman in New France would be on the alert for us. In the forests were savage beasts and warriors. Unless we found a navigable river on which we could take *Le Griffon* to the salt seas we were in a bad way, but no worse off than I had been that day in the longboat on the Bay of Biscay.

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*Presque Isle (Erie).

V

Lucas lies with staring eyes,
In the Lake of the Eries-o,
Five men of the sea in a landlocked Bay,
Look out to the westward-ho,
Where men may dwell, where they can sell,
The loot that's down below.

I WAS uneasy that night and I set an anchor watch. Perhaps it was that melancholy shore. Perhaps it was the faint scent of wood-smoke in the air. Several times before midnight and when the watch was changed I went on deck and stared at the shore standing stark under a bright moon. Peter Gudneau had the second trick and he, too, had misgivings. He made conversation when I came near so as to keep me with him. There was a tenseness of a sort, an air of hovering peril and the Frenchman felt it even as I.

After midnight I crawled into my hammock, but complete sleep would not come. I tossed restlessly and all manner of nightmares bothered me. Anton Lucas came with a rapier through his breast and mocked me, telling me I would never get *Le Griffon* down to the salt seas. I sprang up to kill him or his ghost anew, only to find myself awake with the loud cries of Peter Gudneau in my ears—and then the discharge of the after-swivel.

I rushed on deck. It was just before dawn when the skies are filled with rose-colored light. Strange sights and a loud clamor assailed my eyes and ears.

Peter Gudneau lay dead beneath the swivel, the feathered end of an arrow protruding from his throat, his blood running hot on the deck planking. Savage cries came from a fleet of canoas bearing down on *Le Griffon,* some already so close in that I could look down on the paddlers. There were cries from the other Frenchmen, wakened and brought on deck by the discharge of the swivel, and there were the pings of arrows as they thudded into spar and deck.

I shouted orders which were ignored. Only after grasping two of the Frenchmen and knocking their heads together did they understand what I said, that the after castle must be defended. There was no chance to get to the culverins amidships.

Men with tomahawks and war-clubs were already over the rail in the waist and others were coming up the sides. They bounded aft, and swarmed the ladders on both sides of the castle. Yelling to the Frenchmen to take care of the port stairway I fired both pistols into the faces of the Indians on the starboard stairs, throwing the empty pieces hard after, then meeting them with a handspike grabbed from a rack.

At the head of the other stairway the Frenchmen defended their position with handspike and knife, making a job of it too, had their numbers been anywhere even.

One of the Frenchmen was down, dying, dragging himself aft under the bulwark, ripped open like a slit mackerel. The savages were now whooping with exultation, pressing in harder and harder. An arrow shot from above, from the shrouds of the mainmast, brought down another Frenchman. The survivor fled to my side of the castle, shrieking with fear, a huge Indian hard on his heels with upraised axe. I brained the savage, but not before he had cloven the Frenchman's skull, spattering me with blood and brains.

I retreated from the head of the stairs and sought refuge against the bulwarks where with stout timber at my back I could fend off.

The Indians approached cautiously now. They had felt heavily of my handspike and had no belly for it. There was a grunted order, the men before me stepped aside and a hatchet, thrown by a muscular brave, whizzed by my ear and buried its edge in the wood. Jerking it free, I returned it to its owner! He had not the ability to sidestep, or he was surprised at missing me, because the hatchet took him in the forehead under the hairline of an ornamented scalplock. The head opened up like an apple under a kitchenmaid's knife and his blood and brains tumbled out. There was a fierce yell of anger and once more a wave of savages rolled down on me.

I swung hard, a brave parried with his hatchet, the handspike swung off to a

side where it was grabbed by another brave. In an instant the hatchet was lifted and swung for my head. I dived at the Indian's legs, threw him, but to no avail. I was smothered by an avalanche of foul-smelling creatures who plunged on top of me. My hands were grasped, as were my legs, and I was dragged from beneath the heap and spreadeagled on the bloody planking. Above my eyes swung another hatchet—and it had started the descent that would have lodged it in my brain when there was a sharp authoritative exclamation—and the weapon was checked in midair.

Rudely I was jerked to my feet. I stood ringed by a score of men, some of them injured, some of them blood-stained, but all, every last man-jack, staring at my middle, at that sash with its bright beadwork shining in the morning sun, the sash that had been given me by an Indian chieftain in the shipyard on the Niagara River.

A tall powerful man jabbered at me. He touched the sash. I shook my head and indicated by signs that I did not understand.

He shouted orders and motioned for me to follow him. A minute later we were in a canoa propelled by a half-dozen paddlers headed for the shore. We shot through a narrow strait, into a smaller bay hidden from the larger bay by a fringe of timber, and on the shore of the smaller bay was an encampment of many lodges. That was where the smell of woodsmoke had come from the night before, and where in all probability the Indians had seen *Le Griffon* sail into the bay.

BEFORE a lodge in the center of the camp, seated on a log, was a white man of about fifty years, who eyed me curiously as my captors led me forward.

The Indians talked to the white man, using many gestures, pointing toward the bay, then at me, and at the sash about my waist.

The white man got to his feet. "Who are you?" he asked in French, and my heart leaped, because it was French, spoken as only an Englishman speaks it.

"It would seem that you are English," I replied. "If so, let us talk in that tongue. It has been many a day since I last used it."

"You are English?"

"Yes."

"What were you doing aboard a French vessel?"

"That's a long story, sir. And I might ask what you, an Englishman, are doing in this wilderness with these savages?"

He laughed. "It seems, sir, that we have something to conceal else we be more frank. However, it is a long cry to New York Colony and not yet has the governor an arm long enough to reach me. My name is George Putnam, one-time captain in New York's train-bands under the commonwealth. After the restoration I came west for my health. I have lived with the Eries many years and I like it better than living under the Stuarts. But enough about myself. Chief Watneah here," he jabbed a thumb at the Indian, "wants to know how you came by that wampum you have about your middle. And I'm curious about it myself. Let's have the story, man."

I told the story.

Putnam listened gravely, then translated it to the Indian. The latter replied at length, then he went away, probably back to *Le Griffon*, for I saw his canoa heading out through the strait.

"You are very fortunate," Putnam told me. "The only thing in the world that would save a man who has killed so many Eries as Watneah says you have this morning, would be the great sachem's belt of friendship that you wear about you. The boy you saved is the sachem's son, who with his father was on a mission to the Iroquois when the occurrence you related happened. You are safe for the time being. But in the meantime you might tell me how you came to be with the French."

I began at the first and told Putnam everything.

"You'd better go to New York," he said after I had finished. "Luckily, the Eries and the Iroquois, whose country you will have to traverse, are now at peace. Watneah will not claim the pelts if you demand them. And if I can, I will persuade the chief to give you an

escort and carriers to Fort Orange or Schenectady. I have a selfish desire in this. The men who go with you can bring me news of the colony and many things I need."

All that morning the Eries were busy bringing ashore the lading of *Le Griffon,* the bales of fur and everything that could be pried loose, the sails, the running gear, the hardware and guns.

At noon a cloud of black smoke spiraled up from the bay. It rose over the tree-tops, grew blacker and blacker and was finally rent by red tongues of flame. The ship had been fired. The labor of hand and brain, the good oak and pine, the first vessel to sail the freshwater oceans of North America, would be a mass of charred timbers on the bottom before morning. . . .

I HAD thought to go on with this journal, telling in detail of the time I spent with the Eries, of my difficulties, of Putnam's difficulties in inducing the Indians to let me depart. I would have also detailed how I and my escort traversed the lands of the Five Nations, arriving at Schenectady two months after setting out from the bay, how I disposed of my peltries for seven thousand pounds, how I gratefully loaded down my escort with all manners of goods for themselves, their chief and George Putnam, and for the kin of those I had slain on the deck of *Le Griffon,* but I find I have not the time.

My blackamoor servant hath just arrived from New York town—post-haste—with news that a warrant for my arrest has been issued and that the high sheriff will be here some time tomorrow to serve it—he will find the bird flown—so with these brief lines I must pass over my cruise with Tom Tew, my exultation at the expulsion of James, my settling down as a farmer on Long Island, and my service as a soldier of King William before Schenectady when we sent the French flying.

I must also pass over the plague of black pox which wiped out to a man the Erie settlement on the bay of the Lake of the Eries, including poor Captain Putnam with whom I was in communication at divers times. Suffice it to say that today I am the only man alive who knows what happened to the caravel *Griffon* after she departed from Green Bay on the Lake of the Michigans in September 1679. Despite the reward offered by Sieur LaSalle and other high officials of New France for word of the ship I shall take the tale to the grave with me, and it will remain unknown until such time as this journal is unearthed.—J.H.

ILLUSTRATED
BY
L. STERNE STEVENS

JUNGLE

He whirled on them, his gun smoking and empty. "Wait, for God's sake! The Sawbwa is my friend!"

"PROSPECT the Sawbwa's territory for wolfram and perhaps never get back," the unshaven man said to Tom Carter. "That was the chance. I made my choice. I'm still out of a job."

Tom Carter nodded sympathetically. He was out of a job himself and had little right to judge. As a matter of fact, his own whites were pretty frayed although they were pressed and spotless.

"A few days after I made that choice," the derelict went on, "I looked at myself in the mirror and got a shock at the change in my eyes. It was an old mirror and the ants had eaten away the quicksilver in spots so I could see the skeleton of a lizard that had been trapped behind the glass. I'm rambling, aren't I?"

Again Tom Carter nodded, gently. He

PASSPORT

By KENNETH PERKINS

noticed the drip of betel juice on the man's lower lip. He had actually taken to chewing betel and arica like a native —this man who had been to Ohio State with Tom!

"I'm going to tell you something important, Tom!" The man's red eyes widened dramatically, then focused on his empty glass. Carter took the hint and motioned to the houseboy. "Tom, do you believe in Hindu magic?"

"No! What's the matter with you?"

The derelict looked ashamed of himself—until the houseboy brought those drinks, then he was ashamed of nothing for he snapped to the boy, "Not a chota peg, a *real* one! Fuller. A real whiskey peg, what I mean. There!"

Carter spoke finally. "How did it happen, Jack?"

"How did what happen?"

"How did it start? I mean the skids."

The fellow looked as if he were going to cry. "Both of us here together, on the beach! And you talk to me like that! You've hurt me deeply. College chums! But I was three years ahead of you. You didn't even remember me at first. Chums? Must've been two other fellows. Bum joke." He roved back to the subject. "It doesn't start, Tom. The skids are level and you don't know you're on 'em even when they begin to slant. They get steep after they make a sort of turn. A turning-point, get me? But it's hard to tell when it comes."

"You just wake up and find yourself a bum?" Tom Carter shook his head. He was thinking, "We're both broke—this unshaven wreck and I. But there's a difference. I lost my job with the Burma-States Mining Company because the Japs came. I'm going to join the Army Engineers as soon as I get a few weeks' work to pay off my debts, and buy a ticket to Calcutta. On the beach, yes, but I'll never be like Jack Perley here!"

THE derelict was still talking, hoping to cadge another drink. "That chance I had to go up to the Kong jungles. The Shan-States Limited need tungsten for this war. Don't they, Tom? Wolfram, that's the stuff. They said go up there and prospect for wolfram. I'm talking to you like a brother, Tom. One of their prospectors had told 'em there was wolfram up there, maybe not worth working, maybe plenty. But he wouldn't go up again. Too dangerous."

"You were scared to go yourself?" Tom Carter asked.

"Scared? I resent that! I was told the Sawbwa wouldn't kill anyone exactly. Not a white man anyway. But there's that damned magic for one thing."

"Guess your nerves were already shot, even then," Tom said.

Perley closed one watery eye. "I'll tell you something, Tom. They're all Animists up there. No, not all. Some Hindus, some Moslems, but mostly this damned religion called Animism. Know what I mean? Devils in everything—trees, fruits, bamboo sticks—everything is alive. I mean it has a soul. You might say a devil. You see that tea cozy on the sideboard?"

"Why don't you stay on the subject?"

"Wait. I'm working up to a climax. These animists would say that that tea cozy has a devil in it. It might poison your tea while it's keeping it warm. Tripe to you. But to me—well I—" his hands shook, reaching for the glass. "You see I made my decision. That was the turning-point. The point where the skids start to dip. I decided to wait for an easier job where I wouldn't have to risk anything. Get me? Instead of going up there, I chose this—"

His hand waved from himself to the bar, to an officer or two who had just snubbed him, to the whiskey-peg, to the whole club.

A curious thing happened to Tom Carter. He did not know exactly how the night ended because he spent his last fifteen rupees talking to this derelict alumnus from Ohio State. He had the illusion that he was talking to himself. Fifteen rupees cannot buy many drinks but, because of the dank monsoon, the tropic heat, Carter awoke next morning with a buzzing head.

And he felt shaky. Eggs and tea would fix that. But he did not want chota hazri added to his room bill which he could not pay.

He went out on the veranda to get some air before shaving. There was a man out there sprawled on one of the grasshopper chairs—a young Englishman smoking a cheroot. His immaculate whites reminded Carter that his own had been rained on last night on the way home.

He hesitated at the veranda door—his hand half parting the tatty curtains, undecided about going out. But why not? The fellow was a stranger. What the hell?

He went out and flopped to one of the chairs, his legs spread on the extended rattan arms. The position made his shoes conspicuous. They certainly needed pipe-claying!

The man next to him was having his morning bitters. *That's* what Carter needed to stop this damnable inferiority complex! But he had no money to pay the houseboy for a drink.

He smiled at the stranger, who nodded stiffly. You can't strike up an acquaintance with these Englishmen, unless you are way off in the jungle. The man just sipped and watched the crows chattering in the tamarinds. They cawed at a monkey that hung around the go-down cadging rice from the Brahman cook.

Carter wished that the man would finish that drink and then take another. He would need more ice and ring for the houseboy. Then he would pour some gin in his glass. "If I got to talking with him first, he couldn't very well pour another drink right in front of me without asking me to join him."

Tom Carter cleared his hot throat. "Those crows certainly mean India!" He tried again without getting much more than a polite grunt in answer. "When I go back to the States, I'll always remember India whenever I hear a crow!"

A third time: "You have 'em up-country too. I've just come back. I'm in zinc and tin, you see. Mining engineer."

That did it! The young Englishman turned. "Well, I say! Tin! Zinc!" He tapped the bell on the rattan teapoy and when the houseboy came, ordered ice. "Zinc! You're helping us win this war, what? I'm in petroleum."

CARTER blinked, red-eyed. He had had no idea it would be so easy—this trick of getting a drink for nothing. Of course he must follow up his opening. Something controversial but abstract—that was the usual line of bar flies back home.

"I was talking with a fellow last night. Got me thinking. He was an engineer too. Said something about magic—up there in the Kong district. Imagine an engineer bothering about that sort of thing! Nothing to it of course—this Hindu magic. Or *is* there? I'd like to know your opinion."

"I've seen a little." The man laughed. "A few shabby little tricks up here on the Frontier. But nothing to hold a candle to wireless when it comes to black magic. What was he doing in the Kong jungles?"

"Had a chance to hunt for wolfram, but he was afraid."

The Englishman chuckled. "Everybody's afraid of those Abor tribes. There's a German agent up there stirring trouble so they'll fight us when it'll hurt most."

The number-one boy came with the ice and also, having sized up the situation through native wisdom—with an extra glass. Carter actually blushed, the set-up was so stark and clear—his cadging this drink!

The Englishman rattled on. "There's wolfram up there, no doubt. But we aren't sending any chaps to find out until this war's over and we've bashed the old Sawbwa to his senses."

Carter was not listening any more—not to the Englishman. But he was listening to the tom-toms in his own head. "I'm not Thomas Carter any more. I never cadged a drink in my life. I'm that beachcomber, Jack Perley. *The skids have dipped!* And it's more definite than he made it—this 'turning-point'! This thing I'm doing right here—mooching this drink!"

"However," the Englishman said, "if some chap did have enough real bean in him to go up there, the Sawbwa might give him a concession and passports through his hill tribes."

Tom Carter kept mumbling to himself. "Ever since I woke up I've been thinking, who do I know in this town that might lend me a few rupees? Who can I drop in on at tiffin? Who can I mooch a dinner from tonight? Hell, I even *look* like Jack Perley! Wish I'd put powder on to cover my whiskers."

And there was one other point that put him definitely into Perley's shoes: He had the same choice to make. He could continue cadging drinks, or else go on that dangerous trip to face the Sawbwa of Kong!

He heard the Englishman's voice, as if from a distance—and as if he were talking to another man. "You'll join me? A splash and soda, or bitters, which would you like?"

Carter licked his lips which were like the hot wool of his cummerbund. "No thanks," he said. "I don't drink."

The number-one boy stared, bug-eyed in astonishment. Even the Englishman was surprised, especially when Carter faced him and said, "By the way, I wonder if you could tell me the address of Shan-States, Limited? I want someone to outfit me for a trip up there to the Sawbwa's country."

AT Sibsagar on the Brahmaputra, Carter got his tat ponies and tinned stuff. Three weeks after he had faced Jack Perley's "turning point," he went into the hills and presented himself to the Sawbwa.

The royal compound was like a chicken yard or corral, filled with red and gold bantams and whiskery ponies, and twenty men with home-made guns.

The Sawbwa was short and chunky and his black gabardine and turban made him chunkier, especially when he squatted on a camp stool in front of the white man.

Carter handed him papers and made a speech. The Sawbwa was pleased but also puzzled. He put on glasses and read the credentials aloud. " 'Occupation, mining engineer. Age, twenty-five. Caste, Christian.' But this point: If you are an American, why work for a British firm?"

"I got the job because the British and Americans are one in their need for strategic minerals. It is my war as well as theirs."

"But this wolfram will be transmuted to tungsten steel to strengthen the British shackles over me and my people. A friend of mine who is a wise white man like you, explained the thing to me. I won't have you digging up my mountains. I want you to get out of here. But because of your nationality which is American and not British, you can get out in peace."

Carter tried to think fast, pestered with the barking of dogs, the chatter of crows and the crowd of hillmen behind him. "No. The wolfram is not for the British shackles as your 'friend' who is probably a German, calls them. We ship it to Melbourne and to Sydney and Honolulu and Captown. Every country in the world gets wolfram from these Patkai Mountains. Other sawbwas are getting rich. If you let us develop your country you could build some big pagodas and ride in motor cars."

The Sawbwa nodded, impressed. That point about pagodas was good! He puffed, chuckled, gurgled at his pipe. They all smoked pipes up there—those Dafia and Abor tribes, even the women. Finally he got up which added little to his height. "It might be arranged," he said, waddling off, "after I take it under advisement."

He left Carter standing there listening to the crows and dogs and returning the stares of a hundred silent tribesmen. Just who was advising the Sawbwa, Carter did not know, but he could guess. The secret palaver took some time and there was quarreling in there —not in Assamese or Uriya or any Tibeto-Chinese tongue, but in a stronger guttural. Carter remembered what the district manager of Shan-States Ltd. had warned when he started on this prospecting trip: "The fellow you've got to watch out for isn't the Sawbwa, but an Axis agent who's a ruthless, efficient, bloodthirsty rat if there ever was one!"

"What does he look like?" Carter had asked.

"A big fellow, lanky and blond like you, except he has fat lips. Sometimes he poses as a teak man or else as a peddler of phonographs for rajahs' harems. I'm warning you, but—" the manager had added, "you look like a lot of these thin Americans I've met—genial and slow until a spring goes off!"

When the Sawbwa came out of the bamboo house his whole manner was changed. He seemed definitely disappointed about something. Perhaps his dream of motorcars and new pagodas and wealth had been pricked. He said lugubriously, "Yes, it can be done. But you may have trouble with my hill tribes. They have seen few white men

and because of their fear, they might do you injury. But I can stop that."

Two coolies came out with an old hanging of camel's hair and wool spangled with bits of looking-glass.

"Here is a howdah cloth, once worn by a ceremonial elephant," the Sawbwa said. "It is a gift. Take it in remembrance of me."

Carter could not imagine what it could be used for, unless for one of those "Turkish Corners" popular in the Gay Nineties. The Sawbwa saw his blank expression and explained, "Keep this gift close to you and show it to any of the Abors or other tribes who think to molest you. You will find it has the sacred property of preserving your life."

Carter thanked him profusely. Here was a passport—the very thing he had come for! He only wished that it had been a piece of paper or papyrus leaf so that it would be simpler to tote around. But he lifted the unwieldly bulk of cloth to his pack pony.

Instantly a dozen voices protested. A sawbwa's gift must not be borne by a pack horse which is a coolie among horses. No less a beast than a temple elephant had worn it once! Therefore it deserved a saddle pony.

Carter shrugged as the bundle was tied behind his saddle. When he said good-bye, he smiled cynically at the Sawbwa's last words—that they parted eternal friends, if not exactly brothers of the milk!

IN the jungle tracts the pony hammered along as if riding double, for the cloth weighed as much as a big man. And there were ants in it. Carter felt as if someone had started tickling him, as if a man had climbed up behind him, pressing against his back, bumming a ride. But it did not smell like a man. As the sun sucked out the ancient odors from wool and camel's hair and picked-out silk, it reminded Carter of a circus tent back in the States. He decided to change the bundle to his "coolie" horse, and let tradition go hang!

The pack horse, already loaded down, whoofed and buckjumped. It might have caught the scent of the elephant that last wore that cloth. It might have been a bad elephant, one gone mad with musk, which elephant herdsmen detect by the sense of smell. The tat pony shook off the bundle twice before Carter tied a squaw pack he had learned back in the States.

Although he transferred his blanket roll to his own pony, the pack horse dragged along all that day, never breaking to a trot. That howdah cloth had turned it into a mule. When they reached the river at sunset the pony stood blowing, shaking at the knees, jiggered.

Before making camp, Carter doused the sacred gift in the river, tying it to a creeper so it could soak. It might get rid of those ants. But most of them, he discovered, had already gotten out of the bundle into his food kit. He saved half his food, as much as was tinned, and cooked a meal.

Before putting out his fire that night, he dragged the cloth up the rock slopes, and was aghast at its weight. He heaped more dry creepers on the fire and hung the cloth so it would be dry and light in the morning. Gleaming wet before the fire, its glass spangles shot green rays into the tamarinds and it began to steam, the heat bringing out that strange scent —the scent of wild beasts.

In a way it was an intriguing smell —not the sweat of an elephant's body, for an elephant, Carter had heard, perspires mostly in the toes. It was a strange mixture probably of many magic juices the mahouts use when their beasts are unruly, or ticklish, or given to eating earth, or hot with fever, or sick with anthrax. The odor haunted Carter all night. Nothing had been gained in the washing. It made matters worse, for next morning he found it was still too wet and heavy to pack on his horse. Like Gideon's sponge it had absorbed the dew all night! Intending to leave camp at dawn he lost two hours waiting for the cloth to dry in the hot sun.

That day he traveled with his provisions and blanket roll on his own horse. His pack horse was useless except to carry the pans, ore hammer, pickax—

and that steaming mass of wool and camel's hair.

It was preposterous—this whole game. The Sawbwa, obviously had played a trick on him. On the third day Carter had to put everything on his own horse, except that cloth, and trail on foot when the rides were steep. That was when he decided to throw the damnable gift away.

Luckily he did not destroy it, even though that was his first intention. The monsoon mists kept the thing sodden so it would not burn. He just left it to rot. But as he struck camp he heard the twang of a crossbow in the jungle scrub and his pith hat gave a jerk across his forehead. He took the topee off and pulled out a bamboo arrow.

Before his gun was out of its holster he saw brown faces in the scrub looking at him. Half a dozen men, tatooed with the regularity of crossword puzzles, stepped out in the clearing. Those native cross-bows, Carter knew, could kill game at fifty yards. Before he could count the number of men he would have to shoot before another arrow came, he had a better idea. It was certainly better than risking a slow death by dajaksh with which those arrows were poisoned!

He holstered his gun and pointed beyond his campfire where the howdah cloth lay steaming in the morning sun. He said the only word they would know, "Sawbwa!" and pointed to his breast and back again to the "gift."

A DOZEN more tribesmen popped out of the brush, huddling around their headman. The latter went to the cloth and picked up the edge, examining the faded symbols of birds and flowers and gods. The crowd chattered like monkeys. Some pointed at Carter, at his gun, at his horse, at the foot kit. But the hugyi, their leader, shook his head.

So it was no joke, after all! The howdah cloth was really a passport! The hillmen, instead of surrounding him, drifted together, facing him at a respectful distance while he packed the cloth again on his stove-up tat pony.

When the thugyi and his men prowled off single file into the scrub jungle Carter knew they would not ambush him again. But that was just it. It meant that he could never lose the howdah cloth. It was as important as his very life!

It was more important than the discovery of some grayish brown rocks the next day. The rocks had a faint metallic luster and he tested them for cleavage, but he was thinking of the horse he had lost. The horse got mired while crossing the river of that same khor. Carter tried to save it by cutting it free of that sodden bundle that was drowning it, but he only saved the bundle.

He had trouble pulling the howdah cloth ashore. Swollen with water, it pulled at him like something alive. He slid on the mossy rocks and for a moment had the panic stricken feeling that the thing was sucking at his hands like an octopus. He dropped his hold of it but the wool stuck to the palm of his hands. He shuddered, shook himself loose and scrambled up the bank. The howdah cloth sank back half immersed in the river, a back eddy swelling under it, puffing up a fold with a queer gurgling snort.

The thing was getting Carter. Not that he believed there was any magic to it. Everything that happened, he kept telling himself, was perfectly natural. The devil-magic was up in his own head. He was taking too much quinine, he decided. His ears buzzed and he was hearing things, seeing things too! His hands shook badly when he finally hauled the cloth out of the ooze. They still shook when he made his notes: "Monoclinic crystals twinned; ortnorhombic tabular forms. Perfect cleavage." On the map the Shan-States Company had given him he marked a spot, "Rich in tungstate of iron." Then he planned on getting out.

He would have to walk the whole way, since his saddle horse must be the pack horse now. It had a killing load—provisions, ore specimens, that howdah cloth. Carter packed the blanket roll himself. Five or six days hiking and he would be in British controlled Assam. Then he could tear that gift to bits! He would cover it with treacle and feed it to the ants!

This was what he was plotting that night when it rained and he used the cloth for a pup tent. It was a windy rain and he laughed aloud at how he had turned the tables. The cloth was actually making him snug. Chills got his teeth chattering but he kept laughing. In the middle of the night the wind smacked down his tent and he woke up fighting it, tearing at it in insensate rage, tangled and smothered in it.

卐 TWO days later some native herdsmen passed him as he trudged, distracted, dazed, lugging a huge bundle on his back. He had lost his second horse which had a strained ligament from too great a load. Carter carried the load himself Assam fashion with a strap across his forehead so as to take part of the deadly weight from his back. The natives did not harm him for, despite the rumors about the Sawbwa's hillmen, they were a peaceable lot if left alone. They did not even molest him until a group of herdsmen found him lying face downward with the steaming mass of cloth hunched on his back like the burden of Bunyan's Pilgrim.

The goat herdsmen were curious. It was a strange thing to see this white man lying with a coolie's burden pressing him to the earth. Evidently he was a man whom the gods had touched. They crept up to him to examine the bundle. If he was dead they might find trinkets, like those bits of mirror with which the bundle was spangled.

But they found out he was not as touched as he looked. He rolled over and his hand snapped to his holster.

And then Tom Carter found, to his consternation, that his holster was empty! He struck out, catching one man on the chin. Another drew a knife, but Carter caught his wrist, yanked him down so the knife stuck the herdsman when he fell. The rest fled.

Carter swore at himself. He should not have tried to fight. But that howdah cloth had got him jittery. As a result he was in for some real trouble now. He must get to British country before news of this killing got around.

He fixed the head yoke across his forehead and started limping along. The burden jolted him at every step, slugging him, sending spasms through his skull and his whole body. He had a suspicion that the howdah cloth was a fake. Those herdsmen had jumped him despite his "sacred gift." But he could not take the chance. He had killed a tribesman and that cloth—if it really was a passport—was more precious than ever.

He got over the ridge and saw the sun setting in distant Assam. Against the glare he saw fire smoke and a tent in a clearing. He headed for it. A tent meant a white man. And a white man meant horses. "If I could just get one little tat pony before my back breaks!"

From far behind him drums began to beat. From the valley came the soft sinister flute notes from gourds and bamboo. The jungle throbbed with signals.

When it was dark, Carter came out of the brush and kept limping towards that one dim spot of light, the campfire. Out of the frying pan into the fire—that's where he sensed that he was going. This might be the camp of that foreign agent who was stirring up the Northeastern Frontier states. It was just his luck that this was the man Carter was going to ask to save his life!

"I'll have to dicker with him. I'll tell him about the wolfram and trade my maps for a horse. What good are maps to a man with a broken back?"

It occurred to him that he could memorize a good part of those maps before giving them up. He fumbled for them and then found that they, like his gun, were gone. Someone had frisked him before he fought those herdsmen, while he lay in that exhausted sleep. "But I'll dicker anyway. Whoever this man is, I'll tell him I'm getting out. I'm not prospecting this district any more, I'll tell him."

When he got in the timber, he unfastened his pack and crawled through the underbrush to the edge of the clearing.

A lank-bodied man sat in front of a tent drinking tinned beer. It might be simpler to creep up and leap on his back like a Hindu thag, Carter thought.

He crawled another yard, but a native came leaping through the dhoob grass, heading for the tent.

Carter was close enough so that he could see the white man's lips which, unlike his long body, were very fat. And his eyes seemed to bulge with fat. The native who was evidently his shikari, talked to him. They talked in English although Carter knew it was not the mother tongue of either.

The shikari said, "The man has crawled off somewhere in the scrub, sahib! He was not dying, as I thought when I got his maps and gun."

"He got his strength sleeping two days."

"Now that I think of the matter, it is certain he was not dead for there were no kites in the air. If he follows us, it would be best to shoot him, sahib."

"No. The Sawbwa said no shooting. He's afraid Central Intelligence will investigate if a white man's shot. They'll send a lot of Britishers up to look into it. He's right. He doesn't want to be deposed. We had quite a quarrel about it."

CARTER crawled closer. It would be a hard trick, doing it with his bare hands. He would have to kill them both. And both were armed.

The fat-lipped man opened another tin of beer: "I compromised with the Sawbwa. I said, 'Give the fellow a gift that will break his back and his ponies' backs.' I promised I'd get his maps without killing him."

"But when he finds out he was robbed, he will know the howdah cloth is a fraud and no passport at all. He will cast it off and be free!"

The white man chuckled. "He won't cast it off. The Sawbwa took care of that. He sent some of his ragtag soldiers to attack the man when he first started on his prospecting. They put an arrow in his topee and then pretended the howdah cloth saved his life." He lifted his beer tin but held it halfway to his wet lips. "What's that shake I hear in te air. Or is it my pulse?"

The shikari listened. "You hear drums, sahib. Just some Abor hillmen signaling to each other. One of their tribesmen has been unjustly put to death—so say the drums."

The native put water on the fire to boil and curried some tinned meat, lifting his head to listen to that dreadful formless tremor in the air. Presently he exclaimed. "Sahib! The drums say that the man who killed their tribesman is the one with the howdah cloth!"

The thick-lipped man guffawed. "Killed a native! Fine! That fixes everything! He's done for!"

"That gift, sahib, is a thing of magic. The devil-mahoos have spun a perfect cloth. For, look now, it will identify the man, and thus cause his destruction!"

Another neigh of laughter. "A perfect gift! I got the idea from my own government. Pretend to be a friend of your victim, give him something for his 'protection' which will in time smother him." He rubbed the flying ants from the top of his beer tin, finished the drink and belched. "My government has given howdah cloths to lots of nations. Hurry up with that curry."

The shikari pottered at the fire, but his turbaned head nodded to the rhythm in the monsoon wind as if he had an earache. Suddenly he jumped from his hunkers with a gasp. "There is something in the brush, sahib! These hillmen are crawling through the scrub jungle. They may kill you, for when they are amok, any white man is food for their hate."

"Nonsense. I have passports—a whole sheaf of them on papyrus in Shan and Assamese and Chin. Besides, you said they're looking for a man carrying a cloth!"

The shikari did not argue the point. There was no time, judging from the nearness of those drums. Like an animal, the forest-born shikari could sense the nearness of men by the flight of a night bird, the sudden stop of insects' fiddling. Instead of talking he slipped off in the dark and untethered a pony. When the showdown came this wise shikari would be far away.

He was right about the noise in the brush, the crackling of leaves and dry ferns and creepers. From below the hill

dark figures with cross-bows prowled up the one broad jungle ride—an old elephant trail. Carter crawled back to where he had discarded his burden. He sliced the cords, unfolded it and crept to the edge of the trail where he flung the cloth out so that it spread and flopped to the ground like a carpet.

Light from the campfire barely reached it, glowing on the spangles like fireflies. The fat-lipped man saw it and ran to it, then fired wildly into the black brush from where it had been thrown. He was almost standing on the cloth—when the Abor tribesmen came.

He whirled on them, his gun smoking and empty. "Wait! Wait, for God's sake! I got passports! The Sawbwa is my friend! You got to co-operate with me!"

They did not wait, except to yell and point to the cloth which this white man, apparently, had just thrown down.

"I tell you, please! God, will you listen? My passports—here! I am the friend of all of you—your best friend! I am bringing a new order!"

There was the whang of strong cross-bows, the bird-like whistle of many arrows. The long dark body fairly bristled with bamboo as it sank, fingers jerking at the spangled cloth.

They did not molest his body, or his camp or his horse or his howdah cloth which had identified him. They prowled off single file, in silence. Even the drums and the kans were silent, leaving a vast vacuum above the hills.

Carter got his map, his gun, untethered a fat, sleepy pony. He mounted and dug heels into the hairy flanks.

"It's going to be a long lope, so get up, you whiskery little runt. No loafing now. You're too fat. Need a work-out. It's a turning-point in your life! So, get going—over that ridge and out of the woods!"

DOWN in Shillong, Tom Carter ran into a young, immaculately dressed Englishman some weeks later. The Englishman was sitting on a veranda of the same bungalow where Carter had faced his "turning-point."

"I say! This is a pleasure seeing you again, Mr. Carter!" the Englishman said. "I heard you'd come out of the jungles a week or two ago. Found enough wolfram to fight a small sized war, according to the Shan-States Company!"

They talked. They had some whiskey pegs together. Carter explained that he was resting up for a few days in Shillong before going down to Calcutta to enlist with the American Engineers.

"You know, Mr. Carter," the Englishman said, "I owe you an apology. You remember that morning when I was sitting here, and you came out and sat down in that chair over there—"

"I remember, perhaps better than you think," Carter said.

"Yes, but I must explain. I was rather rude, kept brushing you off. Well, the fact is I mistook you for another man, a fellow by the name of Jack Perley who hangs around cadging drinks, complaining he can't find work anywhere. A regular right-down tramp." He chuckled. "Hang it all, how can I put it? I thought you were cadging a drink from me that morning, actually! Because you see I thought you were Jack Perley. I can't understand why I made such a mistake, thinking *you* were that man!"

"Not a very bad mistake," Carter said. "I was that man."

The Englishman gaped. "I say—I don't understand quite—"

"If I explained, I'd be baring a very personal secret," Carter said and changed the subject. "By the way, do you believe in Hindu magic?"

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES DE FEO

Olaf forced himself forward against the solid battering ram of the cold.

THE SECOND TRAP

By GENE HENRY

OLAF wasn't exactly afraid, but his nerves were fiddle-tight. His work-thickened hands did not tremble, even when he reached, in the cold dark of the kitchen, for his skis; but they were aware of the importance of what he had to do, just as every cell in his body was aware that the bed against the wall, where his son Peder always slept, was empty; and that Peder would never sleep there or anywhere else again if Olaf failed tonight.

Taking one ski in each hand, he hugged them under his arms so there would be no chance for them to knock together as he reached to pull open the door. He did this instinctively, not with any real fear that the Nazi guard would hear. The guard was down the road toward the village, and no man, in this weather, could stand guard with his ears uncovered. But you could never tell with the Nazis. Sometimes they were smart enough to set a second trap.

Trapping was one thing which Olaf knew all about. He had trapped in the mountains back of the village for forty years. He knew many things not found in books and was full of ignorance in ways which men think important. He left religion to the church, science to the mathematicians, and government to the politicians. Olaf didn't understand politics. He knew this, and was satisfied that men better than himself should attend to the government. He felt, not so much betrayed, as astounded that smart men, with fine educations, had let the Nazis trap all Norway.

He had never said this to anyone. But when Peder told him what the young men of the village were doing, how they had built a radio station deep in the woods below the town, and were talking with people in England, Olaf had been moved to remind the boy that it is safer to have a second plan in case a machine fails.

Peder laughed at him. Peder thought him old-fashioned. He was old-fashioned. He knew that a bullet can stop the bravest man. And he knew, also, that no bullet can stop the thing a man believes in, if the man believes hard enough.

Olaf believed so hard that he was forced to say to Peder, "You ought to have a second trap."

PEDER knew what he meant. Peder was a good trapper, too. He knew how, when you're trying to catch a wary animal, like a stoat, you set one trap and bait it, in the open. Then you set another trap, to one side, and cover it with snow so that the stoat, cautiously circling the baited trap, will step, unknowingly, into the second, hidden trap.

"How do you mean a second trap?" Peder had asked.

"Well, now, the people in England hope to trap those big Nazis that are coming to meet in the village."

"That's right."

"And you've let them know the day they plan to meet. Maybe they'll fool you. Maybe the big Nazis won't come that day."

"The English will be waiting, out at sea," Peder said. "We'll let them know, by radio, the very morning they plan to attack."

"There'd ought to be a second trap."

Peder was annoyed with him. He said, angrily, "You don't know about these things."

"Have the men who do know done so well for Norway?"

Something about the quiet way Olaf asked this question startled Peder. He flushed, and asked, "What sort of trap?"

"In case your radio don't work, there'd ought to be another signal. That cabin of mine on the mountain back of the town. I could send up a smoke signal from there would be seen for miles at sea."

It was good to have mentioned that cabin. It stood for the things which Olaf did know. Olaf was the first man in the district to recognize that a certain saddle in the mountain back of the village was kept so clean of snow by a scouring wind that a cabin there would be no more than half buried even in the hardest winters. Olaf had built his cabin close against a cliff, and Peder very well knew that the smoke of that cabin carried up the cliff face straight against the sky. Peder had watched for that smoke from the time he could toddle to the kitchen window.

"It could be seen, of course," he admitted. "But nothing will go wrong with the radio."

"You tell the English, anyway."

After a heavy moment, Peder had agreed.

There was one thing Olaf could depend upon, and that was Peder's word. Peder had said he'd tell the English about the smoke signal from the mountain. That was why Olaf moved so

surely now to open the door of his house.

As he stepped out into the crackling dark, the wind hit him. It was a bad wind, a round-faced wind full-bearded with frost. It would keep the guard's ears covered, but it would make Olaf's climb to the cabin a thing of double hardship.

It was so cold that a hard crust held clear across the flat where the sun struck hot at noon. Olaf didn't put on his skis until he reached the first slope. And that was well, because the sawing of skis through snow has a rhythm which the nerves may catch. He had to take off his mittens to put on his skis. Those mittens were something he'd hidden from the raiding Nazis. He'd made them himself, of rabbit skins, carefully stretched and salted. Against this very need, he'd buried them in the snow, so they wouldn't dry and crack. Rabbit skin is frail and brittle. The mittens would stand but one careful wearing.

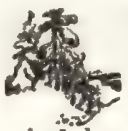
As he started up the first rise, he looked back toward the village. There was no sign that a town was there. No lights, no sound, no shape of houses against the black sighing of the sea.

Up to this moment Olaf had been able not to think of Peder. But once he'd got his bearings, from the wind and from certain black masses against the fainter black of the snow, and had set his body slogging heavily in familiar ways, his mind leaped free. He couldn't, now, hold back the pictures that scored his brain like whips of fire. Peder caught in the deep woods. Peder, fighting savagely for the things in which he believed. A bullet had stopped Peder. And a rifle butt had stopped his radio. But the faith went on, with Olaf, straining up the steep mountainside, accompanied by the wind, fighting to untangle its feet from the clawing fingers of the pines.

Olaf was too good a trapper to think that the thing was done now that he had escaped from the town and begun the long climb. He wasn't a man to walk into a second trap for lack of keeping alert. The slow mold of helpless waiting had been scraped off his nerves by the message sent by Peder's friends two hours ago. The Nazis who had caught

The wind would keep the guard's ears covered. . . .

Peder in the woods had only wounded him. They were saving him for the pleasure of the big Nazis who arrived that night, after dark. Unless Olaf could set his smoke signal for the English, the big Nazis would make a holiday to finish off Peder and as many of the townspeople as they required to slake their rage.



IT was the blackest night Olaf could remember. Not even a star was visible. It was as though the body of the wind lay solid between earth and sky. There was a change, now, in that wind. The weather was softening, and the wind had a wet mouth. The Nazis had taken Olaf's good fur-lined coat. He had cut up one of his worn blankets and fitted it around his torso under his summer coat. But this damp cold touched his very marrow. His toes were beginning to feel wooden. And his hands stung. So long as they stung, he was not worried. It was when the hands no longer ached that a man need worry.

Olaf had no watch, and there were no stars to give him a hint of the time. But there was as yet no dawn smell in the air. He had time, if nothing happened to delay him. He forged doggedly ahead and up.

It wasn't the slip that set fear spark-

ing in him, although in straining to retrieve his balance the left mitten split against his ski staff, and his left hand was now burning as if held against a hot stove. The fear had nothing to do with the slip. It was a thing that filled his nostrils like the odor of danger. A thing that a man who has lived in the high loneliness of silent mountains knows better than to ignore. A trap was set for him. And he didn't know where it was. He knew only the need to struggle on, to make time where he could, to plant his careful, unseen herringbone up the steep pitches, to hold his senses wide open for danger.

It was almost all steep going now, and that steadied his laboring heart, because that meant the cabin wasn't far off. Catching the first smell of approaching dawn, he tried to hurry, and realized from the clumsy response of his ski staffs that his hands no longer ached. He stopped, planted his ski staffs in the snow, and flailed his arms, trying to warm his hands. He did not dare take off his mittens. His wooden hands might tear the delicate skins. He tried thrusting his hands under his armpits, carefully, so that the friction of the fur against his coat should not rip the rabbit skins. He was not alarmed, because this thing had to be done, for Peder's sake. And when a thing has to be done, a man must do it.

The instant he started forward, he *was* alarmed. The brief stop had betrayed him. He was no longer a young man. The Nazis had kept him in the village so long his muscles had gone slack. They began to cramp with overstrain. He forced himself forward by the strength of his faith.

Faith was like a fire in him, holding back the slow slushing of his veins. He laid his head blindly into the wind, moving his legs with his will set against their searing ache. There was no bullet here to stop a man. Only the solid battering ram of the cold.

It was when the going leveled off, telling him that he had reached the saddle where the cabin perched, that it came to him how drugged he was with cold. For a moment he couldn't shake himself awake enough to know which way to turn to the cabin. The thought of Peder, lying like a crippled dog waiting for the big Nazis to prop him up and shoot him down again, stabbed him awake. He turned automatically and headed for the cabin. When he lifted his head, feeling the wind dying down ahead of the dawn, he realized that his eyes were frozen shut. The wind had cut his eyes, making them water. Had finally bound his lashes together with the salt ice of his tears. Panic shook him. He dared not take the mittens off his hands to free his eyes lest his hands freeze. Rubbing his eyes on the shoulders of his rough coat was like rubbing sand into his eyeballs. Yet how could he find the cabin without eyes?

"Hold fast, Olaf," he said aloud. "Before this you have found that cabin in the dark."

He knew very well to what he was to hold fast. He felt sure that the fire burning in him would bring him through. But that was before he saw the jaws of the trap.

It was not too hard to find the cabin. It was set close against the cliff that lifted to the summit. A man had only to slide his skis ahead, slowly, till they struck the cliff, making as sure as he could with his blind senses that he did not over-shoot too far to the left and go over the brink.

"In such a moment," Olaf told himself, "a man lives a whole lifetime."

His left ski struck the cliff. He was safe. Relief strengthened him. He had not known until this instant that he had carried Peder with him, all the way.

TURNING parallel to the cliff, he began to feel a cautious way forward. Set as it was against the cliff in the full path of the scouring winds, the cabin would not be buried altogether, but it would have some drift against it. He must keep alive in his nerve ends if he was not to miss it.

When a reaching ski pointed suddenly upward at an angle, he paused. He was mounting a drift. Could it be a drift under which the cabin lay buried? He would go forward two ski lengths before he returned to dig. The second ski

length sent him sliding unexpectedly downward, and before he could stop himself, he had crashed into something that was not rock. It was the cabin. But when he tried to lift a hand to touch it, he discovered his hand was locked fast. He could not let go of the ski staff. It was then he looked straight into the gaping jaws of the trap.

He had reached the cabin. And he had reached it before dawn. But how was he to start a fire with frost-stiffened hands?

There is an animal instinct which takes hold of a man when he is trapped. Olaf was fumbling his hands between his knees before he could get his mind working. Gripping and pulling with his knees, he contrived to strip off his mittens and, with them, the ski staves. He beat his hands against his thighs, blew on them, and thrust them under his armpits. He couldn't get them limber. But he got enough circulation into them to set them burning as if hot needles were jabbed into them. It took only a moment to convince himself that those hands could not unfasten the buckles to free his feet from the skis. He dared not spare the time to free his eyes.

His mind was working slowly but clearly now. Sitting there in the drift, one shoulder against the cabin, and his feet thrust sidewise so that his skis lay parallel with the cabin wall, be began to edge his way around the cabin, hunting the door. The drift lay halfway up the cabin side, so that he could easily reach the rough, wooden latch. Triumph surged in him when he swung the door inward. A little care, now, and Peder would be safe.

It was a small cabin, nine by ten, with a dirt floor, and a small sheet-iron stove standing near the door. Olaf was a good woodsman. He never left this cabin till the stove was cold, so that he could lay a fire against a cold return. Good, quick-starting whittled shavings and pitchy chunks lay in the stove, and in a tightly lidded tin can on a nearby shelf were matches. The first problem was to get into the cabin with his skis on.

He knew at once that it was dangerous to try to bring his feet into the cabin, a ski might strike the stove and shove it aside; might disconnect the stovepipe so that the smoke, for which the English watched, would not go up in a straight black column, but spread around and hide itself against the cliff. There was just one thing to do. From the height of the drift, Olaf went headfirst down into the cabin.

His reaching hands gave under him. He came down onto his face on the icy earth. The stale cold of the closed cabin rushed over him like a dry wave. The heels of his skis stuck solidly in the drift before the cabin, holding his feet up so that he could turn onto his side only with a twist that seemed as if it would wrench him in two. There was a flavor of gall on his tongue. A scalding drip from his nostrils stung his raw nerves like a hornet. Every breath was like a thing which he ate.

Hunching himself on his elbows, he reached toward the tin of matches. He knew where it was. He had lifted it many times in the dark. Now, there was no feeling in his hand. He could have touched fire without knowing it. The cold was creeping up his legs. It would have him trussed, helplessly, within minutes. With a lunge of fury he swept the shelf with a clubbed hand.

The can came off the shelf. He heard the clink as it struck the ice-hard dirt floor, heard the faint *tink* as the lid flew off, and knew that the matches were spewed out somewhere in the dark around him. Terror mounted in cold waves to his throbbing head. He beat his hands against his chest, rubbed them against his face, his eyes, rolled on them and thrust them into his mouth. With one hand he felt along the floor, searching for a match. There was no feeling in the hand save a fiery throb. Had he found a match, he couldn't have gripped it. Couldn't close his stiffened fingers around the slender bit of wood. He was beaten. And Peder was lost.

The thought of Peder struck flint to the rock of faith of the man. He had come here to save Peder. He was here. Was a thing so small as a match to beat him?

It wasn't instinct that moved him then. Nor was it reasoning. It was the

thing which moves a man to a deed beyond his power. A thing to which no man dare lay a name.

Working in a still vacuum of purpose, he swept about him with his arms upon the dirt floor, sweeping whatever lay there up about his head. Then he turned, flattening himself, with his mouth against the dirt. His working lips found a match. He tasted sulphur, and knew he had got the head of the match into his mouth, spoiling it. He spat it aside, and tried again.

HE never knew how long he fought there in the trap, his mouth against the matches. Time has no measure which can encompass such a moment. He *knew* his fumbling mouth would find the wood end of a match. It might be the last one he hadn't slavered into uselessness. What matter, if he saved one?

Against all odds, he made it. He got a matchstick in his lips. Sweat, like the sweat of death, beaded his face as he lay there, worrying the stick into the bite of his teeth. That was a moment. That was a time when a man knows he is a man.

Hunching himself on his elbows, he fumbled forward, searching with his face for the stove, breath rasping in his throat. When his sweaty cheek touched the cold iron of the stove, it stuck, and skin tore off like ragged bits of live pain before he'd bumped open the stove door with his head. He had his distance from the stove now, and he took a tighter grip on the match with his teeth as he reached to strike it against the stove. The rasp of the match was deafening. Flame blinded him, searing his nose. He held the thing till, tilting his head toward the stove door, flame ran up his nostrils. With a groan of anguish, he dropped it. It fell into a scattering of shavings and pitchy chips, flickered against another matchhead, flared, died —*caught.*

It was only then that he realized that his sweat, and the fumbling and rubbing at his face had freed his eyes. He could see.

His arms jerked so that he could scarcely rake the scattered chips against the feeble blaze. He coughed, in the acrid smoke, and strangled, lest his coughing blow out the precious fire. Then, straining mightily from his hips, he cupped his dead hands about the burning fragments and scooped them into the stove. They lay there a shattering instant, just this edge of death; then caught, flickered, and went roaring up the chimney in a mad snapping of sparks.

Olaf looked out the door. It was still dark. He would warm himself and get his skis off. And just as the dawn broke, he would thrust into the roaring stove the spruce bows from his bunk. Help would come for Peder from far out at sea.

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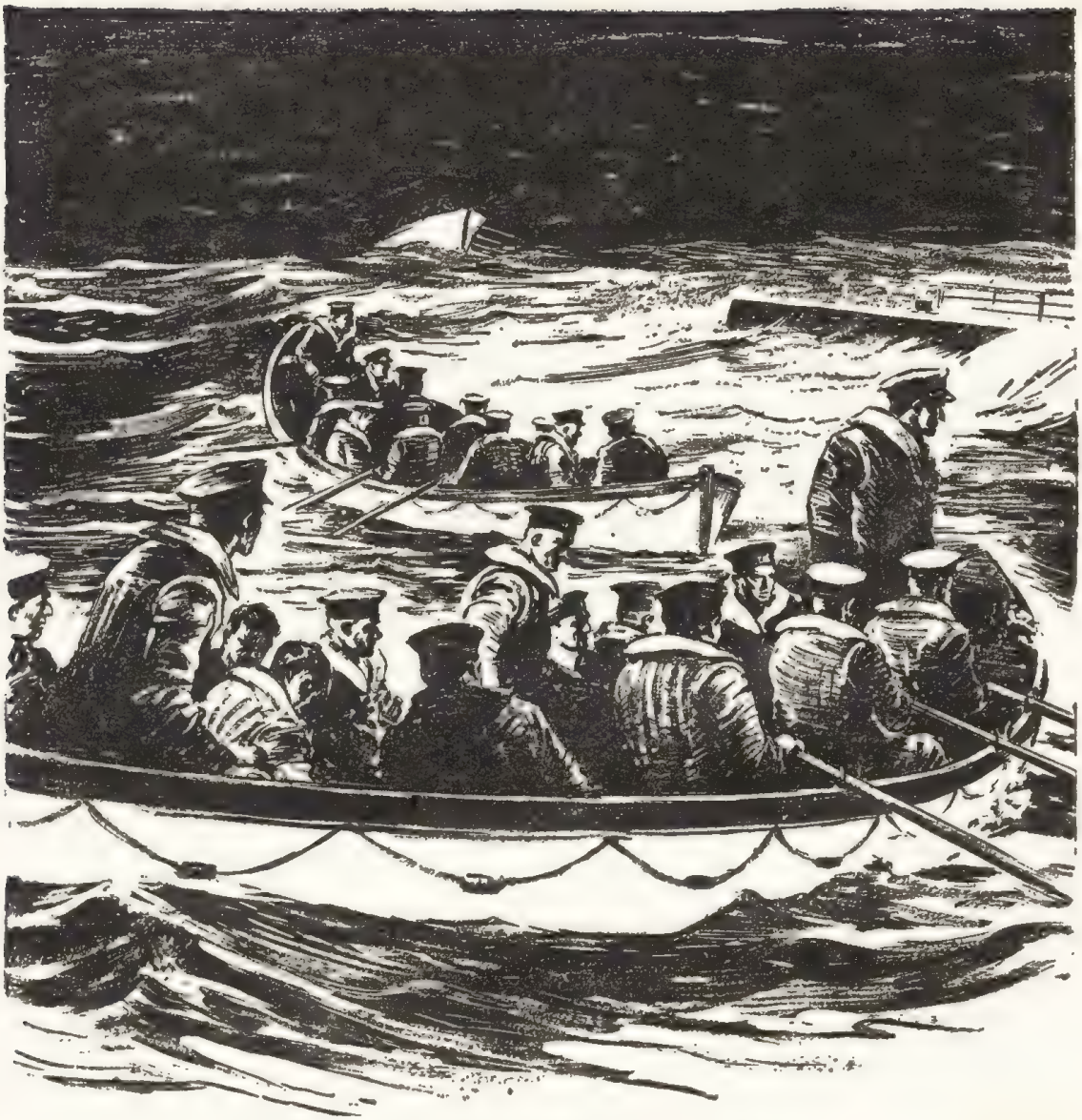
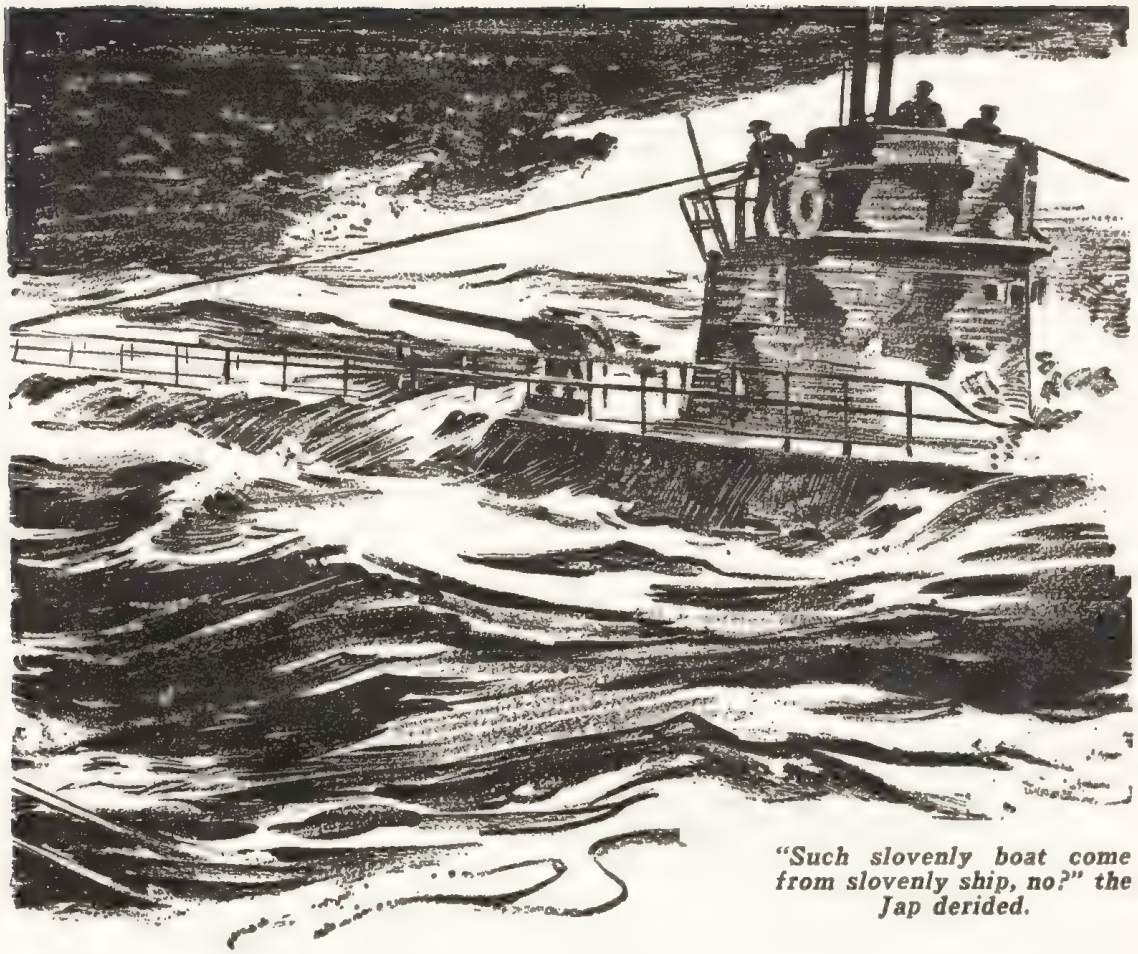


GRANDFATHER'S SECRET WEAPON

By COMMANDER GEOFFREY LOWIS, AFC, RN

SUB-LIEUTENANT GEORGE WAKELY read the distance run, noted the barometer, the thermometer (wet and dry) and added the figures to the long columns in the log of His Majesty's Ship *Campronia*. Under the log book a large-scale chart of part of the Pacific Ocean lay stretched.

George was about to go below when two small black penciled crosses on the chart caught his eye. They were something new; not there when George had last gone off watch. He bent his long body over the chart table and studied them more closely. Those crosses had been ships. Now there was only empty



"Such slovenly boat come from slovenly ship, no?" the Jap derided.

ocean and crushed hulls lying fathoms deep. The Japs had been busy again.

That settles it, thought George, *I'll see the commander now.*

George knew the commander was in his cabin, bound to be, swotting over new regulations; but he went first to the wardroom. The commander didn't snap so fiercely on neutral soil, and there was just a chance he might be there.

The wardroom was empty except for three subs and the young doc playing bridge. They greeted George cheerfully. "Hullo; what's today's brainfruit?"

"I wish you'd invent something that'd deal me an ace occasionally." The young doc threw in his hand. "Why can't you think of something useful?"

George grinned pleasantly but his long face still looked something like a sheep. He didn't answer, for long ago he had learned not to match his tongue against the wardroom wits. George's talents lay in his fingers not in his speech, which was a pity for he needed glib talk right now. Outside the commander's cabin, George waited for a full minute trying to summon up guts to enter.

Commander Bent was engaged in two wars. Keeping the ship at the highest pitch of efficiency was the easier one, and more enjoyable than the unending battles with new regulations. But, like it or not, Bent was a stickler for obeying the last comma of each law.

He was studying the latest batch of Admiralty Fleet Orders, still undigested from the last mail, and frowned as George knocked. "What is it?" he sighed. "I'm very busy."

George shifted the weight of his long body from one foot to the other. His carroty hair was slicked down and his eyes bulged as he leaned forward trying to speak. He knew exactly what to say, but now he could only swallow helplessly.

He had a scheme. George was beset by schemes that had made him the despair of every commander throughout

his short naval career. At last the words came.

"Those Jap subs, sir. They're down our way again, sinking ships."

"Damnation, man! Don't waste my time with news like that. We've done all we can, everything regulations prescribe. Isn't that enough for you?"

George shrank. "Yes, sir. But I was wondering if I could have a depth charge in my life boat?"

The commander pushed the chair back from his desk and passed a hand wearily over his forehead. "Depth charges are dangerous toys."

"Might get a chance of dropping it on the sub, sir."

"From a small life boat? You'd blow yourself to bits, man. You've got to be moving fast to get away before they go up."

"I thought perhaps . . . ?"

Bent was looking at his wrist watch. "Time for Dusk Defense," he said, rising to go.

George made way for the commander. As he passed he pointed at the watch. "How's it going, sir?" he asked.

A smile broke on Bent's earnest face. "Perfectly, since you tinkered with it. You stick to your watch-making hobby, young fellow, and get your mind off depth charges."

THEY had all laughed at George at school when he had tried for the Navy. "Admiral Duckpond" they had called him when he failed for the Naval College, so he had enlisted and shown that he had it in him, climbing up from the ranks.

Old Grand-daddy Wakely was really the one responsible. He had told George what to do. "Where there's a will there's a way," the old man used to say. "Don't you ever stop trying. If you want something, go on till you get it." He had taught him to take watches and clocks apart, making him put back the pieces by himself. Trial and error. Going on and on till they all fitted.

George brought his mind back to his routine duties. All the guns were manned to prepare for the night attack that never came. Sights adjusted to a short range; the gun tubs filled with water and shells and cartridges put ready. Voice tubes and telephones tested. Every night the same.

When it was finished, George beckoned to a messenger. "Tell Petty Officer Kelly that I should like to see him aft on C. Deck."

Kelly found George sitting with his long legs tucked under a depth charge, his fingers toying with a piece of string. George was born with restless fingers.

"Ye sent for me, sorr," said Kelly, saluting.

"I want to make quite sure," said George, "that if we set this thing to go off at fifty feet it'll be dead safe at thirty."

"Safe it is, sorr; as safe as an ould vixen in her earth." Kelly liked to talk, and of all things conversational the mechanism of his charges had a high priority, almost as high as his poaching exploits in the Ould Counthry. His greasy coat nearly left his shoulders as he wagged a finger at George. "But drop it anither twenty feet and it's Glory Be to any sub that's near it."

"Let's have a look at the machinery," said George. "We can open up this spare charge here."

Kelly extracted a wrench from the jumble of pencils and pens in his vest pocket. "It's only meself that I'd trust to do it, sorr, not anither body in the whole ship. But have a look at it ye shall."

It was a quarter of an hour later that George made his way to his cabin with a distinct bulge in the right hand pocket of his coat. Petty Officer Kelly pushed back his cap and scratched the gray bristles underneath.

"If the commander gets to hear of it, it's an able seaman I shall be again," he muttered.

NEXT morning George stood with his division while the commander despatched the men to their morning's work. He had had the middle watch, from midnight till four o'clock, an excellent occasion for undisturbed reflection while his fingers felt the outline of something in his right hand pocket.

"Training Class fall in aft." Bent barked out the order and a dozen men stepped out of the ranks and doubled away. "Petty Officer Kelly," he continued, "I should like you to instruct the class in depth charges this morning. Take them to the spare and strip it down. I'll be along in a few minutes."

George looked alarmed but Petty Officer Kelly positively shook. "Beggin' yer pardon, sorr," he began and ended as the certainty of a disrating robbed him of speech. The commander was a stickler for the regulations.

The commander's lip tightened. "Well, what is it?" he asked abruptly.

Kelly stood speechless, his native wit lost.

George stepped forward and saluted. "I had that depth charge painted yesterday," he said rather breathlessly. "The paint's still wet; couldn't Kelly use one of the others?"

"I don't like it, but I suppose he'll have to," said Bent. "You should have consulted me about that painting."

"I'm sorry, sir," said George. "It was just a touch-up job. By the way, sir, there's one of the new Admiralty Fleet Orders that I'm not clear about. Could you explain it for me?"

The two officers walked off together as Kelly marched his class away, and when the commander joined the class fifteen minutes later, the spare depth charge gleamed with fresh paint like a peace-time gun turret. Two of the training class had suspiciously fresh paint on their fingers, but a large notice *WET PAINT* on the spare charge concealed the omission of a very important part.

For three calm days and shimmering nights *Campronia* zig-zagged back to port. George Wakely spent more time than usual in his cabin but the commander was too wrapped up in his routine to notice.

IT WAS half an hour after midnight on the third night when three explosions shook the ship awake. The alarm rattlers started clamorously and then died down as the lights faded out. Through the darkness men fumbled to the emergency lighting while others dashed to their places at the guns on deck.

Useless guns without a target. Their crews lined the rails staring over the empty moonlit water. It lay placid. Not a fin or a wing broke the translucent surface. Slowly the great ship took a list to port.

George had left his bunk with the first explosion. He had been practically blown out of it in fact. He ignored the alarm rattlers, calling everybody to their action stations. A metal mechanism, the size of a car's carburetor, lay under the shirts in his bureau drawer. He seized it and hurried aft.

In the darkness there was a clink of metal striking metal as George bent over the spare depth charge. "Damn that Kelly," he said. "I wish to God he'd come and lend a hand."

He paused in his work and looked along the deck. The ship was listing more each minute. "We'll have a light, anyhow," he said. "Too late to matter now." He switched on a torch and nimbly fastened it to his cap to shine on both hands as they worked.

Commander Bent was forward.

A torpedo, exploding under the bosun's store, had started a small fire. Petty Officer Kelly had been on watch and was busy with the fire party getting the emergency pumps going. *Good fellow, Kelly!* thought Bent. *Trust him to be where he's wanted.*

He hurried back along the sloping deck and looked into the engine-room. It was a shocking sight. Water was nearly up to C. Deck, and the rays of his torch showed two bodies, terribly mangled, floating in it.

Mr. McLean, the chief shipwright, panted up. "You'll need to get on deck quick, sir; she won't last ten minutes more."

"Nothing we can do?" Bent asked.

"Not a thing, sir." McLean shook his head. "There's half the side blown out of her."

Bent looked around and saw the bugler standing by him. He felt a glow of satisfaction. Everybody at the right place; just as at exercise.

He nodded to the bugler. "Abandon ship; sound off."

Down the dim alleyways men hurried along, blowing up their lifebelts, the supply party loaded down with blankets, milk, and prunes. Bent stood for a moment watching them. *Now I know what a producer feels at a first night,* he thought. Another thought struck him and he made his way forward.

Kelly and his men were still busy with the fire pumps. The fire was gaining rapidly.

"Drop that and up on deck," Bent shouted. "Kelly, didn't you hear the bugle?"

"Yes sorr, but we couldn't leave this all ablaze."

Bent laughed out loud and followed them on deck. All the boats were in the water and the falls swung idly as the ship listed more and more to port.

AFT, George and a seaman that he had found labored at a tackle trying to hoist the spare depth charge off its bed.

"Can't budge it, sir," said Able Seaman Smith.

"God, we've got to" said George, "and quickly, too. Come on—another try—both together—heave."

The depth charge trembled and then lifted up and swung over the side. They lowered it into the water by a waiting life boat—George's life boat come to take it and with men taught what to do. They hung the depth charge thirty feet below the boat and kept another thirty feet of rope in hand.

"Shove off—quick," said George. He and Smith dived in and swam after the boat only just in time. The stern where they had been working lowered itself into the water and the whole length of the ship towered over their heads. The bows lifted higher and higher and water foamed where the stern had been. Then the whole ship seemed to slide down like a slow motion diver in a pool.

George and Smith were soon picked up and then went back to pick up others, black specks floating in the churning water.

"I was never one for moonlight bathing," said Kelly as they hauled him into the boat. "Leastwise, not unless you had a salmon net to play with."

"Forget your salmon, we've got bigger fish to catch," said George. "And where the hell were you when you were wanted aft?"

"Sorr, I'm a sorrowful man. But there was a fire, sorr, and you wouldn't be havin' me leave that, would you now? Have ye picked up the commander, sorr? He was along with us."

They rowed on and found the commander senseless, kept afloat by his lifebelt. There was a jagged cut above the right temple where some stanchion had struck him as the ship went down.

"It's a lucky man he is to be alive at all, sorr," observed Kelly. "Now, are we all ready for them divils?"

"No thanks to you," said George, "but everything's set. Now don't you let me down a second time."

"Cross me heart, sorr, ye can count on me." Kelly searched in his wet pockets for his pipe and sucked the salt water out of it.

The moon shone down on the little cluster of boats. Bits of wreckage and life floats dotted the calm sea. It might have been worse, thought George. He started to see what could be done for the commander and then hailed the other boats.

"Where's the captain, which boat's he in?"

There was no answer from the little group. George took his boat back among the wreckage to make another search.

"Holy Virgin, what's that?" Kelly jumped up in his excitement. Two hundred yards away, the placid water seethed and two periscopes appeared as if raised by some monstrous unseen elevator. After the long, stick-like periscopes, first the conning tower and then the whole length of black hull broke surface and lay on the calm sea while little waterfalls cascaded down, glistening in the moonlight.

Three men appeared in the conning tower and the sub turned and steered straight for the group of boats.

"Which boat has the captain?" came in clipped speech from behind a megaphone.

George glanced at the commander who was showing signs of coming

around. "Captain's dead," he shouted, "but the commander's here." Then in a whisper, "Go on, Kelly."

THE submarine stopped as the boat grated alongside. Kelly reached out and secured the end of a rope to a rung on the sub's side below the conning tower, to hold the boat in place.

"Where is commander?" asked the voice from the conning tower.

"He is injured," said George. "What do you want?"

"The name of your ship, that is all." The voice paused. "My machine guns need practice; shall I ask with them?" The captain of the sub jerked his hand at Kelly lounging on the gunwale of the boat. "Such slovenly boat come from slovenly ship, no?"

George ignored the insult. From the corner of his eye he could see what Kelly's broad beam hid from the Jap. Kelly was preparing to cast off the rope holding the boat in place. Then the depth charge would hang down sixty feet below the sub instead of a safe thirty from the life boat.

George couldn't speak. He felt dizzy. His heart was pounding. He had to say something, but he could only swallow helplessly. His scheme was working. With an immense effort he held his breath and blurted out the one word, "*Campronia.*"

Commander Bent staggered to his feet. "I am the senior officer in this boat," he said stiffly. "Kindly address your remarks to me." He turned to George. "Not another word from you," he said.

There was a louder hiss from the conning tower followed by a sharp order in Japanese. "I am very obliged. We have all that we require." The sub started to move ahead.

Kelly jumped up and threw the bight of the rope over the side, the rope with the depth charge at the other end. "Bejabers!" he exulted. "That was worth all the salmon in Donegal."

George tilted his watch to catch the moonlight. The commander's voice seemed far away. " . . . name of heaven . . . giving information to the enemy . . . court martialed . . ."

"They have exactly fifty seconds more to live, sir," interrupted George. "There is a two minutes delay action to that depth charge; it came out of my alarm clock. It started when we dropped the rope holding the charge which let it go to sixty feet."

"What depth charge?" asked the commander.

George looked up from his watch. "That's two minutes gone; damn those drug store clocks."

"What depth charge?" repeated the commander.

He sat down with a bump as the boat rocked to the explosion where the submarine had been.

IN A cabin of the rescuing destroyer next day, Commander Bent was sitting writing at the desk. George Wakely was sitting on the bunk, his fingers busy with a piece of string.

Bent watched carefully. He didn't want any mistake in the official report. "You hung the depth charge thirty feet below your boat," he said, "and then made fast thirty feet of the same rope to the submarine. Then you let go the bight holding your boat to the submarine and so transferred the charge to hang under her, only at sixty feet instead of thirty."

"That's right, sir," said George.

"And where did the depth charge come from?"

"From Grandfather," murmured George, his eyes far away.

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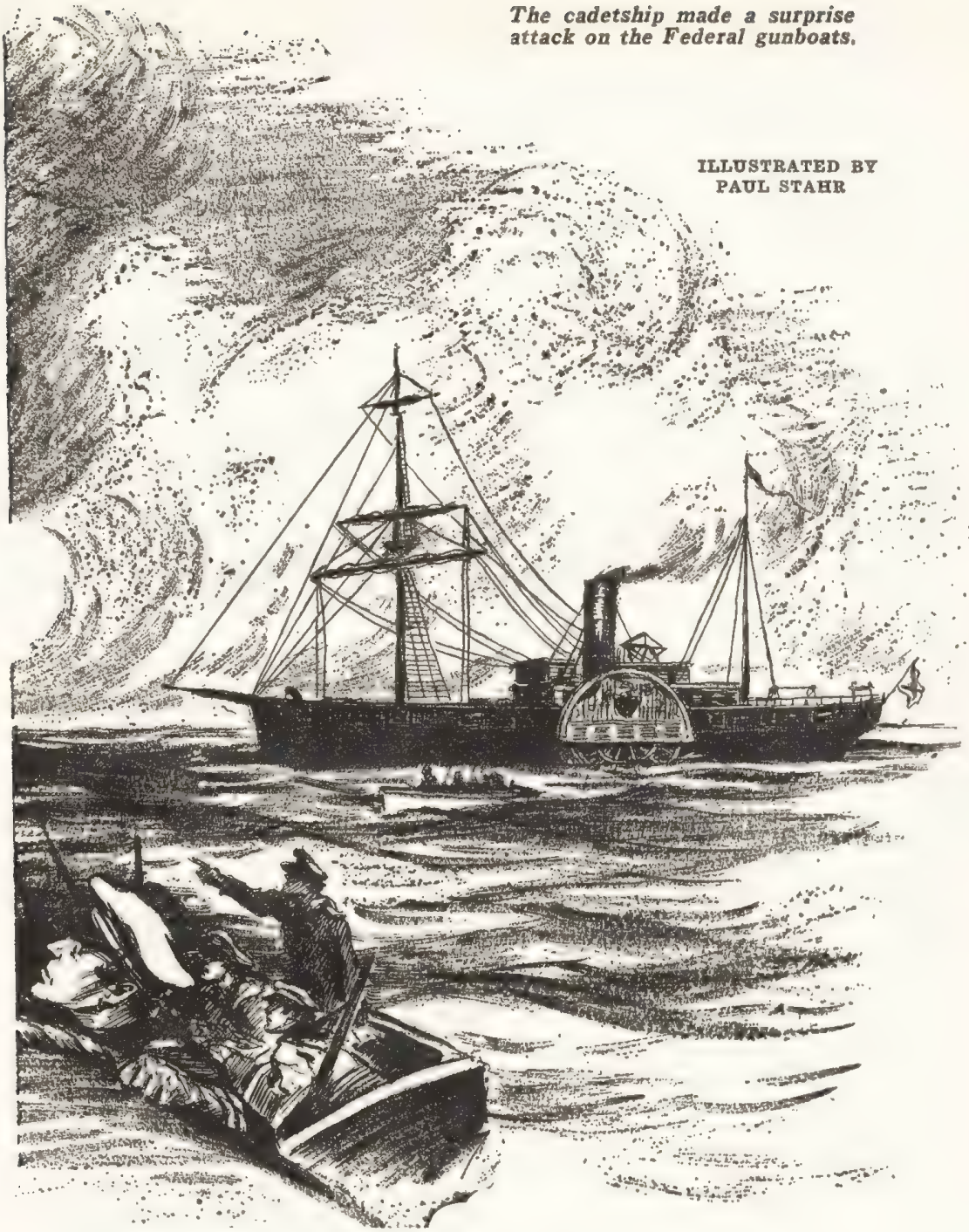
A FACT STORY

FIGHTING CADETSHIP of the CONFEDERACY

By H. G. RUSSELL

The cadetship made a surprise attack on the Federal gunboats.

ILLUSTRATED BY
PAUL STAHR



THE Professor of Astronomy and Navigation had no trouble holding the attention of the young Southern aristocrats who sat before him. First, they were gentlemen; and gentlemen give their undivided attention when a senior addresses them. Secondly, they were embryo officers; and officers must learn to obey before they can hope to command. Perhaps the only distraction which they may have been guilty of was the fault of the professor's tailor, who had decked him out in the trim steel gray of the Confederate States Navy. Gray in one shade or other was the adopted color for the uniforms of most of the units of the Southern Confederacy. Her navy had elected to shun the universal blue used by the Federal fleet, in fact by the navies of all the rest of the

world. This navy of Dixie was not only original but distinctive. The navy that gave the world the submarine and the armored warship produced the gray-clad sailors whose careers on the seas were as brief as they were brilliant.

But Professor Oscar F. Johnson was a splendid representative of the typical Confederate naval officer in his double-breasted frock coat with rolling collar, the two rows of gilt buttons reflecting the sunlight that streamed in through the cabin windows. He wore the shoulder straps of a lieutenant, one gold star on a field of sky blue. As he raised his arm to call attention to his calculations based on Bowditch, the one-half inch gold stripe, artistically looped, drew the gaze of the midshipmen, who dreamed of the day when they, too, would wear a lieutenant's insignia in the new navy of Dixie. If it had been slightly warmer on this May morning in 1864, Professor Johnson would have donned his white ducks; but the cool breezes off the James virtually prescribed regulation grays. They were worn by professor and students alike, with creases that seemed as sharp as the steel whose shade their fabric was dyed to resemble.

Considering the events that followed, it was well indeed that the Southern middies and their fighting professor were dressed for service instead of parade.

An orderly knocked and entered the cabin that served as one of the classrooms on the schoolship. He saluted Lieutenant Johnson, handing him a hastily penciled order from the commandant of the Confederate States Naval Academy. The fighting professor scanned the order, then in a low tone and without visible emotion he said: "The gentlemen will please rise, repair to their quarters to secure their cutlasses and carbines, and form on the hurricane deck."

THIS order was the first of its kind but not the last; for the routine on which the young midshipmen of the Confederacy were now to embark was to become as familiar to them as the mathematics, the physics, and the French which they studied aboard ship. "From calculus to cutlasses" might well have been the slogan of the Confederate naval cadets.

The Federal gunboats and monitors were steaming up the James, once more threatening the capital of the Confederacy. Richmond was in a panic at the dark tidings brought in by scouts and couriers. The Northern general, Ben Butler, who had landed his force at Bermuda Hundreds, inspired fear and hatred in the souls of the Southerners. "God forbid that Richmond should suffer the humiliation that Butler inflicted on New Orleans," was a prayer uttered throughout the hilly city. With but 3,000 Confederate troops between the point at which Butler had landed and the Confederate capital, the city was indeed in peril. Moreover, General Lee's left flank was endangered, anchored as it was to the batteries along the river.

Commodore Mitchell, commanding the James River Squadron, reinforced the batteries in the vicinity of Drewry's Bluff with his sailors and marines, leaving skeleton crews aboard ship. Then the gravity of the peril increased as the Federal fleet approached. The fourteen- to eighteen-year-old midshipmen were called upon suddenly to put into practice the theory they had been studying. Replacing books with battle equipment the youngsters under the command of their professors piled into the tenders, the youngest of the cadets ferrying their seniors to the new *Virginia,* which was then getting up steam to meet the Union warships. Another detachment led by Lieutenant Wilburn Hall followed as soon as the tenders of the plebes returned; while Lieutenant Parker, the commandant, conducted the third detachment to his old ship, the *Fredericksburg.* The remaining cadets on the schoolship participated in scouting expeditions down the stream. Lieutenant Billups, who instructed them in seamanship, had reason to be proud of his pupils for their proficiency in handling small boats, for their skill was being subjected to the acid test of working under fire. And that fire was coming from the muskets of enemy sharpshooters!

Thus the youngsters of the South's best families learned the lessons of the art of war not from books alone. It was not for effect but for service that the

Confederate schoolship, *Patrick Henry*, carried two naval surgeons as a permanent part of the ship's complement. Shells from Yankee batteries and bullets from Yankee muskets did not discriminate between fourteen and forty.

Bleeding and exhausted, the middies returned to the *Patrick Henry* to rest and recuperate for studies that seemed more serious than ever. But the Union gunboats had been driven back. Richmond was again granted a reprieve. Boys, not old enough to vote, had not been too young to die. From May until September the drama aboard the floating naval academy was re-enacted many times. There was little lull in the fighting on the river. All classes were suspended for the summer of 1864, but the midshipmen spent their recess in actual combat on the river and on shore, returning to their classes aboard the *Patrick Henry* in September, seasoned though youthful warriors.

In spite of reverses on land and crushing defeats on sea, the fighting leaders of the South had not given up hope of attaining ultimate victory. Included in their plans for carrying the war to a successful conclusion was the rebuilding of the gallant navy which had been driven to cover by the more powerful and rapidly growing Northern fleet. Not only were ships needed but crews as well, and no unimportant part in this program of naval rehabilitation was the plan for the establishment of the Confederate States Naval Academy, the smallest and least known officers' school in America. The story of the Annapolis of the Confederacy is a story of youth, heroism, and hope. It was born, lived its brief but glorious existence, and died during and in the midst of the greatest conflict that was ever waged on American soil. Yet, the memory of the Confederate academy is so dim that it is virtually forgotten. Its record, though a brilliant one, is but another little-known chapter in American history.

WHILE the Act of March 16, 1861 practically implied the setting up of such an academy, the pressing exigencies of the war were too great to permit any time or effort to the working out of the problem. The colossal task of building a navy to defend the water approaches against the Federal fleets and manning that hastily acquired sea arm with all the available personnel, left little or no time for the establishment of an institution to rival the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Former officers of the United States Navy who had cast their lot with the fortunes of their states were commissioned immediately and ordered aboard ship as fast as the vessels could be armed and made seaworthy. Young aspirants to officer rank in the Confederate Navy were also appointed and assigned to ships, their superiors assuming that their professional education would proceed with the cruise and terminate with their death or triumphant return. For more than one, commencement would be held in Davy Jones' locker. These embryo officers were known as acting midshipmen. Considering the feats of heroism and the blood and glory with which many of them were covered, the term "acting midshipmen" had a meaning, stark and real, that was the subject of many a grim jest. In the spring of 1862 the law limited the number of acting midshipmen to 106. Graduates of this very active service course were called passed midshipmen. There were at this time but twenty vacancies for this grade, to be filled by the successful competitors in naval and general academic examinations.

However, it was not until the following spring that Secretary of the Confederate Navy Mallory put into operation the machinery for founding the Annapolis of the Confederacy. Although the Southern navy had been put on the defensive, it will be remembered that the Battle of Gettysburg was not fought until July of this year. General Lee and his brilliant lieutenant, Stonewall Jackson, had been making the Federal generals look like amateurs in spite of the superior numbers and supplies and equipment that flowed from the North. The people of Washington did not feel any too safe, and for a while it seemed that reveille in Washington might be sounded on a Confederate bugle. It is not so surprising then that the leaders

of the South still had hopes for a new navy. It is a tribute to their foresight that they thought of this navy not only in terms of future ships but of future officers to command them.

Secretary Mallory chose the brilliant Lieutenant H. Parker as commandant of the projected naval academy. The son of a distinguished officer in the United States Navy, Lieutenant Parker was no untried novice to the business of training young naval officers. Having entered Annapolis when he was but fourteen, he graduated at the head of his class. After a period of duty at sea, he returned to his alma mater to become an assistant professor of mathematics. But far from limiting himself to this most essential branch, he became the author of textbooks on seamanship, naval tactics, naval gunnery and navigation that were adopted both in Annapolis and the Confederate States Naval Academy. His splendid theoretical training was exceeded only by rich, practical experience. Having participated in the epic battle of Hampton Roads as commander of the gunboat *Beaufort,* he later became executive officer of the iron clad *Palmetto State* which helped break the blockade at Charleston while he was second in command.

With the memory of his illustrious father in the United States Navy and the traditions of that great service constantly in his mind, along with the promising career he had felt compelled to forsake for the uncertainty the South offered, he was faced with the fact that his own brother was a distinguished officer in the Northern fleet and the unhappy possibility of meeting him in mortal combat. But in spite of this personal emotional problem, which he in common with many another officer of the Confederacy faced, Secretary Mallory could not have called on a more able man.

Accordingly, on July 23, 1863, the Confederate Secretary of the Navy approved the plans and regulations which Lieutenant Parker had prepared for the establishment of the new school. The floating Annapolis of the Confederacy became an integral part of the Southern war effort.

IT HAS often been said that a school is what its faculty and student body make it; that buildings, no matter how impressive, will not suffice to provide that certain something which makes an institution distinctive. This was certainly true of the Confederate States Naval Academy; for, while its faculty was brilliant and distinguished and its student body included the elite of the Southern aristocracy, it was without buildings and grounds, maintaining its existence entirely afloat. The decks of the Confederate steamer *Patrick Henry* took the place of halls and foyer; her cabins served as classrooms, with hammocks swung below deck in lieu of dormitories; and the shimmering expanse of the James River, the only campus the Confederate naval cadets were to know.

But the *Patrick Henry* was no ignominious ship. Short as her career had been in the service of the Confederacy before she became the cadetship, she had enjoyed her traditions and her triumphs. Originally built to plow the peaceful waters between New York and Richmond, this side-wheeler had carried passengers and cargo for the New York and Old Dominion Line, appearing on the books of the owners as the *Yorktown.* When Virginia seceded, the state confiscated the *Patrick Henry* and her sister ship the *Jamestown.* They were fitted out immediately as warships to be used in the defense of the James River. One of the first ships to be partially protected by armor, the *Patrick Henry* was reinforced by one-inch iron plates extending a couple of feet either side of boiler and engines and running two feet below the water-line. There were also V-shaped iron shields forward and aft on the spar-deck to provide additional protection against shot and shell aimed into the bow or stern of the ship. While this amount of metal was pretty meager, it gave her an edge over ships entirely constructed of wood, like the U. S. frigate *Congress* which the *Patrick Henry* assailed in Hampton Roads. Had she been protected with armor to any greater extent, it is feared she would have gone to the bottom of the James before she hardly left the wharf.

Of fourteen hundred tons displacement, she was considered fast for her time. She carried a broadside battery of ten thirty-two-pounders, one ten-inch gun, firing shells mounted forward, and an eight-inch solid shot gun, the most effective, mounted aft. Her full complement consisted of 150 officers and men, including a detachment of marines under Lieutenant R. H. Henderson. The first skipper of the *Patrick Henry* was Commander John Randolph Tucker, a competent and gallant Virginian who had served in the United States Navy from 1826, when he entered as a fourteen year old midshipman, until the outbreak of the war. After the fall of the Confederacy, he became a rear-admiral, commanding the combined fleets of Chile and Peru in the war against Spain.

Commander Tucker was not the man to wait for the enemy to take the initiative. Chafing at the delay of the Federals, he got up steam and sailed down the James to challenge the gunboats of the Union fleet anchored off Newport News. He failed to provoke an encounter this September 13 in 1861 and he returned to the station off Mulberry Island. But on December 1 of the same year he descended the river, making a surprise attack on the Federal gunboats. Although these skirmishes were comparatively indecisive, they kept the Federal squadron from effecting a junction with the Union army during the Peninsula campaign. Such aggressive defense of the river kept the Northerners from ascending the stream and attacking the old county seats on the banks. The ladies of Richmond and these towns slept more easily in the knowledge that the *Patrick Henry* kept the night vigil for them on the river.

THE fighting cadetship of the Confederacy played a major part in the battle of Hampton Roads on March 8, 1862. Assigned the mission of burning the frigate *Congress*, the Confederate side-wheeler dashed into the thick of the fight, taking a peppering from the *Minnesota* and the Federal batteries on shore. Her engine-room and boilers were struck by shells fired by the field artillery of the Regulars, scalding to death six of her firemen. Her boiler then exploded and she was drifting into the *Minnesota* when she was rescued by her sister ship, the *Jamestown* and towed to a less perilous station. Before nightfall, her engineers, working like beavers, had repaired one of her two boilers and she returned to the fight under her own power. Her part, however, in the action of the next day was eclipsed by the historic duel between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimac*. The *Patrick Henry* returned to Drewry's Bluff where her guns and crew were used to strengthen that position, repelling the attack of the Federal squadron on May 15, one week after the battle of Hampton Roads. The officers, sailors, and marines of the *Patrick Henry* became a part of the permanent garrison of the river stronghold at Drewry's Bluff, while the ship lay inactive at her old mooring at Rocketts in Richmond until she was refitted as the schoolship of the Confederate Naval Academy in the fall of 1863.

This cadetship of the Confederacy was originally rigged as a brigantine with square yards on the foremast and fore-and-aft sheets on the mainmast. During her two years of fighting her sails were removed, the masts being replaced by signal poles to enable her to run the gauntlet of the Federal batteries by night with less risk of drawing their fire. But the square-rigged foremast was refitted when the ship was converted into a floating academy. Thus the middies were given practice in reefing and furling the canvas. A bowsprit was likewise added and the cabins of the old liner were again built in to provide classrooms and other quarters essential to the needs of a schoolship.

With a faculty of battle-scarred professors, many of whom had been trained at Annapolis and a commandant who had taught in that famous naval academy, the fighting cadetship of the Confederacy was launched upon its brilliant though brief career in September 1863. The course was based upon the program of studies of its Northern rival, covering twenty-two subjects over the four-year period it was never destined to survive. But during the two short school years

of its perilous existence ten fighting professors gave instruction in astronomy, navigation, surveying, seamanship, gunnery, mathematics, physics, French, German, infantry tactics, and fencing. All these teachers were commissioned officers, including the swordmaster whose time was devoted exclusively to teaching the middies how to wield their swords and cutlasses with deadly effect, invaluable lessons to which many of them owed their lives.

Fifty bright youngsters appointed by the Confederate President or members of the Confederate Congress entered the school after passing a rigid physical test and a mental one that did not embrace much more than the three R's. But once enrolled these fourteen- to eighteen-year-old lads were introduced to a meaty intellectual fare.

A DAY in the life of the Confederate naval cadet began at seven with the morning gun, lasting until taps at ten. Studies and exercises aboard ship took up most of the day, but the planned routine was so frequently interrupted by the calls to battle stations that it was a rare day when the middy did not have to drop his books to pick up carbine or cutlass. But in spite of their proximity to the scene of battle, the fighting midshipmen of Dixie, true to the traditions of the South, held their evening parade in dress uniform whenever conditions would at all permit. The intellectual fare was a lot better than that served at the middies' mess; for these were trying times for the Confederacy with flour selling for twelve hundred Confederate dollars a barrel. The young aristocrats tightened their belts and sat down to a breakfast of hardtack and synthetic coffee brewed from a mixture of sweet potatoes and beans. After six hours gruelling work at class, in the boats, or in the batteries, the midshipmen returned to the main meal at two in the afternoon. Salt pork, stewed vegetables, and corn cakes provided the most typical dinner. Supper was just not mentioned.

Sitting down to the humble board and partaking of the Spartan discipline were sons of celebrities in the Confederacy. Admiral Raphael Semmes, skipper of the commerce-destroyer *Alabama*, sent his boy to the fighting cadetship. Among the shipmates of young Semmes were a son of the Confederate Secretary of War, a nephew of General Robert E. Lee, and a young brother-in-law of President Jefferson Davis. While the United States Naval Academy had been removed from Annapolis to Newport, Rhode Island, to prevent its possible capture by the Confederates, these future officers of Dixie's navy were being taught and trained under fire within range of Union batteries and warships.

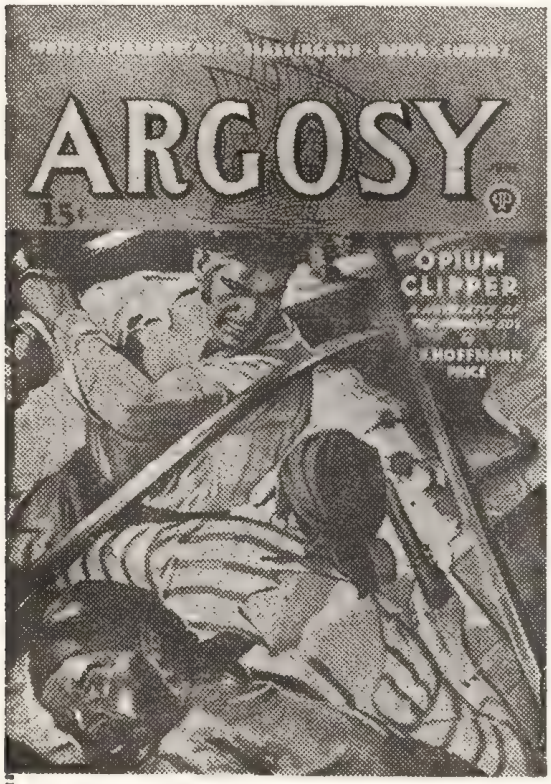
But the days of the Confederacy were rapidly drawing to a close; Lee was being pushed back on the defenses of Richmond, the Confederate forces were fighting in rags with equipment salvaged from the enemy dead, and Richmond was in grave danger of falling. Secretary Mallory hoped to remove the naval academy from its perilous position on the James to a safer haven farther into the interior of the Confederacy, but the advance of the Union forces on all fronts and the internal crumbling of the South left no location that could be picked as an alternative. While the naval cadets were defending the bridge over the river at Wilton, Commandant Parker was ordered to abandon the cadetship and burn it as an obstruction to the Federal fleet. He was then on April 2, 1865 to proceed with the midshipmen to the Danville railway depot to report to the Quartermaster General of the Army. He carried out the order, first detailing Lieutenant Billups and ten of the cadets to the heart-breaking task of burning the *Patrick Henry*. It is not difficult to imagine the sentiments of these brave youngsters as they applied the torch to the hardy little side-wheeler that had been their home for the past eighteen months. In the confusion, Lieutenant Billups' little detachment never succeeded in rejoining their comrades.

The remaining forty cadets proceeded into the heart of the Confederacy with the train that carried the state papers and gold of the fast sinking government. This last assignment of Dixie's fighting naval cadets took them as far south as Georgia and back to South Carolina.

Acting as the armed escort of the gold and documents, they refused to disband until they had delivered the treasure into the hands of the President of the Confederacy. During the journey by train and later by wagon they were in grave danger of attack from roving bands of outlaws and irregulars that swarmed over the South in an episode of lawlessness. Within easy range of Sherman's cavalry, the cadets succeeded in eluding them, carrying out their mission while the last vestiges of the Confederacy collapsed around them. They were formally dismissed at Abbeville, South Carolina on May 2, 1865. One of the most curious facts of this little-known saga is contained in the order of dismissal, which merely detached the midshipmen from the school for a furlough at home, their commandant still holding out hope. Thus of all the forces of the Confederacy, the fighting middies never formally surrendered!

Proving that the lessons learned on the schoolship were lasting even though the floating academy had an existence that was short and transitory, the former fighting midshipmen subsequently carved careers of honor and esteem in the new united nation. Midshipman Jefferson Davis Howell had an eventful career at sea, becoming captain of a Pacific liner, participating in many acts of heroism, and eventually losing his life in a gallant rescue. Midshipman C. R. Breckenridge lived to enjoy a successful career in the United States Congress. Other shipmates of the *Patrick Henry* attained eminence as authors, educators, historians, clergymen, and attorneys.

Surely, some of these eminent citizens, the former Confederate naval cadets, must have met in later days in Baltimore, in Richmond, or elsewhere for a sociable glass, enlivened by the awakening of memories aboard the *Patrick Henry*. On such gala occasions we may be certain that that good old fighting cadetship of the Confederacy went sidewheeling right into their hearts where she found an anchorage more secure and less tumultuous than her old berth at Drewry's Bluff.



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THE DEVIL SPIDER

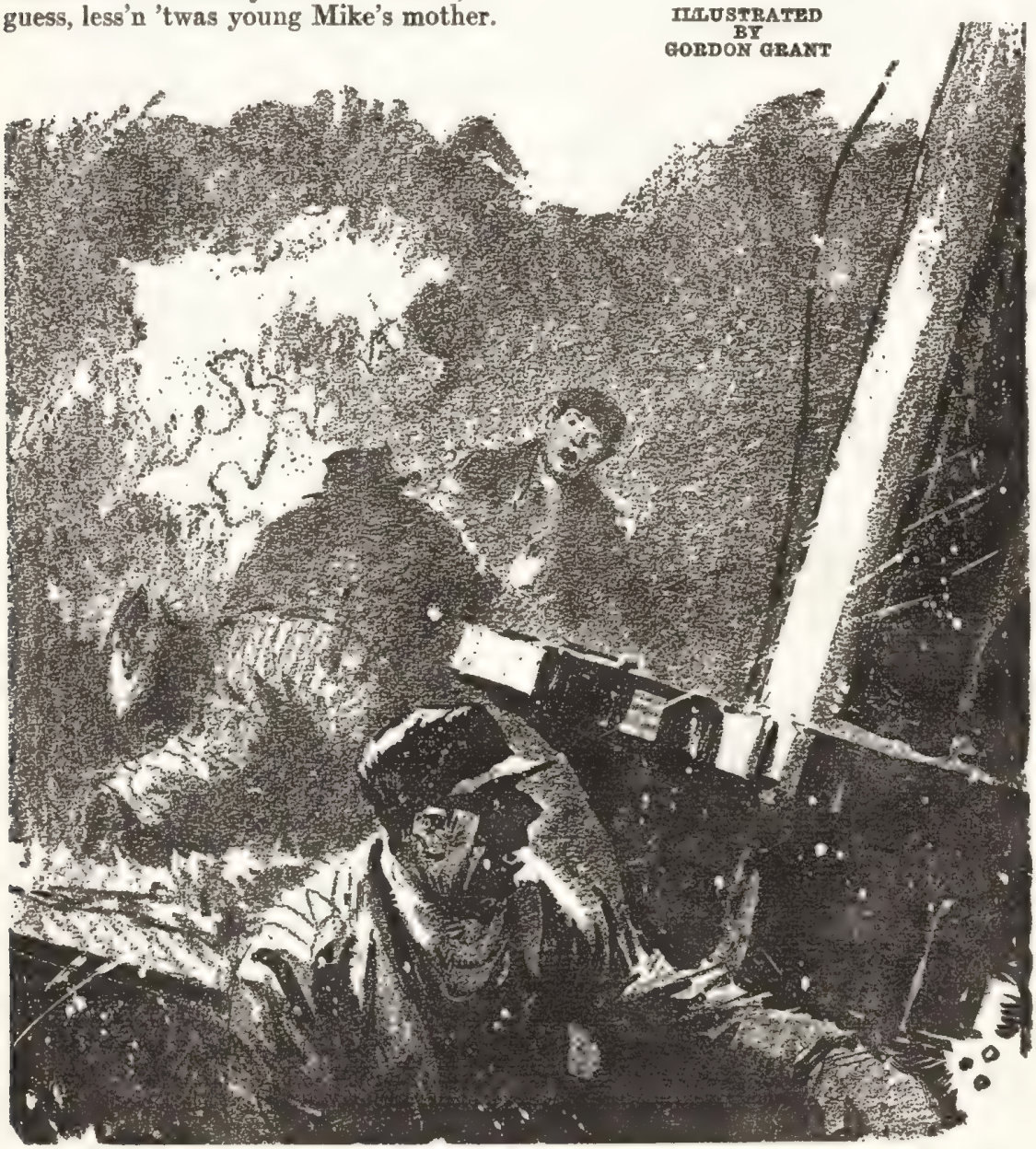
By FRANCIS GOTT

THE first time I saw Mike Dunning all I could think of was one of them hairy old spiders I used to scare Dad with as a boy. Now spiders never bothered me none, but there's some as are deathly afraid of 'em.

Men feared Mike Dunning; them as didn't respect his honesty. His boy loved him. Nobody else ever did, I guess, less'n 'twas young Mike's mother. Hard—Mike was.

'Twas plain cruel seein' young Mike eat his heart out because old Mike had no place for his boy inside that shell of his. And the more cruel because young Mike wanted to enlist, but was torn with uncertainty, not knowing how his

ILLUSTRATED BY GORDON GRANT



The ship listed heavily and mooring hawsers groaned against the strain. . . .

. . . "Stop her!" I cried and jumped toward the boom table.

old man really felt toward him. Although wantin' to well enough, young Mike didn't feel like marching off to war until he had dragged old Mike out of the past.

In 1935 there were only forty-one of us in the Casco Iron Works. The whispers of approaching war, however, were reaching us even then. More men dribbled in; mostly men we knew. The yard was going after government contracts. Five hundred men was the total now; we thought that a lot, we who had weathered the depression. Home-town men, mostly. But war was creeping nearer; government contracts swelled. Then the war boom hit us, staggered us. Two thousand men in our yard in 1940. Then—December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor. Eleven thousand men in 1942; our once calm shipyard was now a shrieking, screaming, noisy mushroom.

Long-necked twenty-ton cranes, geared to overloads, marched against the sky. The smoke of welding moiled about gaunt steel by day, sparks fell like rain by night. Mostly strangers, now—men who rode the boom, farmers, fishermen, factory workers, woodsmen, small-town men from all over the state; green men, new to shipyards.

Yet there were some, men from God knew where, veterans of booms, men who knew a trade, men with the stink of far off places, of other shipyards, of oilfields, in their nostrils.

Men like Mike Dunning.

OUR rigging loft takes in the whole second floor of a large brick warehouse in the north end of the yard. To the south lies the river. In between are the ways for fifteen ships a-building; with a city of machine shops, boiler rooms, storerooms, bending floors, blacksmith shops, paint shops, rigging and erector shacks, making an old-timer like me shudder in his boots—and look wise. And over all the ceaseless clank of twelve great marching cranes, on steel trestles, ever probing the sky with sensitive snouts; one lost or misplaced load might well mean the death of many men. The first-aid rooms and the hospital, newly built, have yawning doors. It is hard for us old-timers to realize that this is war on the home front.

I had come in from outside; we had just stepped a mast. Sitting down on a padded bench, I began putting an eye splice in an eight-inch manila hawser, but I soon looked up to see two strangers come in.

"Where's the foreman?" the older man asked. He had a whispery voice, like old rusty wire that ain't handled much.

"You huntin' for work?" I asked. I looked into his eyes. Brown, they were, with devil flecks of gold glowing in 'em; they hid the personality of the man back of 'em. Hard, he was; and a rigger; I could see that much.

"You the boss?" he came back at me, his lips twisted like.

Young Barbour, the foreman, sauntered toward us, hands in pockets. He had on creased pants and a white shirt; I didn't hold that ag'in him, but I couldn't quite see a man that never dirtied his hands on a rigging job—me bein' foreman in my day.

"I'm the foreman," Barbour said, his usual self-satisfied smirk riding his thin lips.

When the personnel office sends a man to a foreman he's as good as hired. Barbour didn't tell 'em that. He went through a lot of mummery, feeling his authority, asking 'em questions in that silky voice of his.

"Sure, I'm a rigger," the older man growled. He loosened his heavy sheepskin coat, for the heat of the loft was beginning to clutch at him, he being an outdoor man. "Me b'y, too; I trained 'im."

"Is that so?" Barbour asked, with put-on politeness. He would close his smooth jaws tight, until the flower shaped scar on his left cheek became colorless.

It ain't many full fledged riggers we are lucky enough to get, the trade having stagnated in these parts for so long. The best we can do, these days, is take on seamen and train 'em. I looked these two new-comers over, careful. Curious, I was.

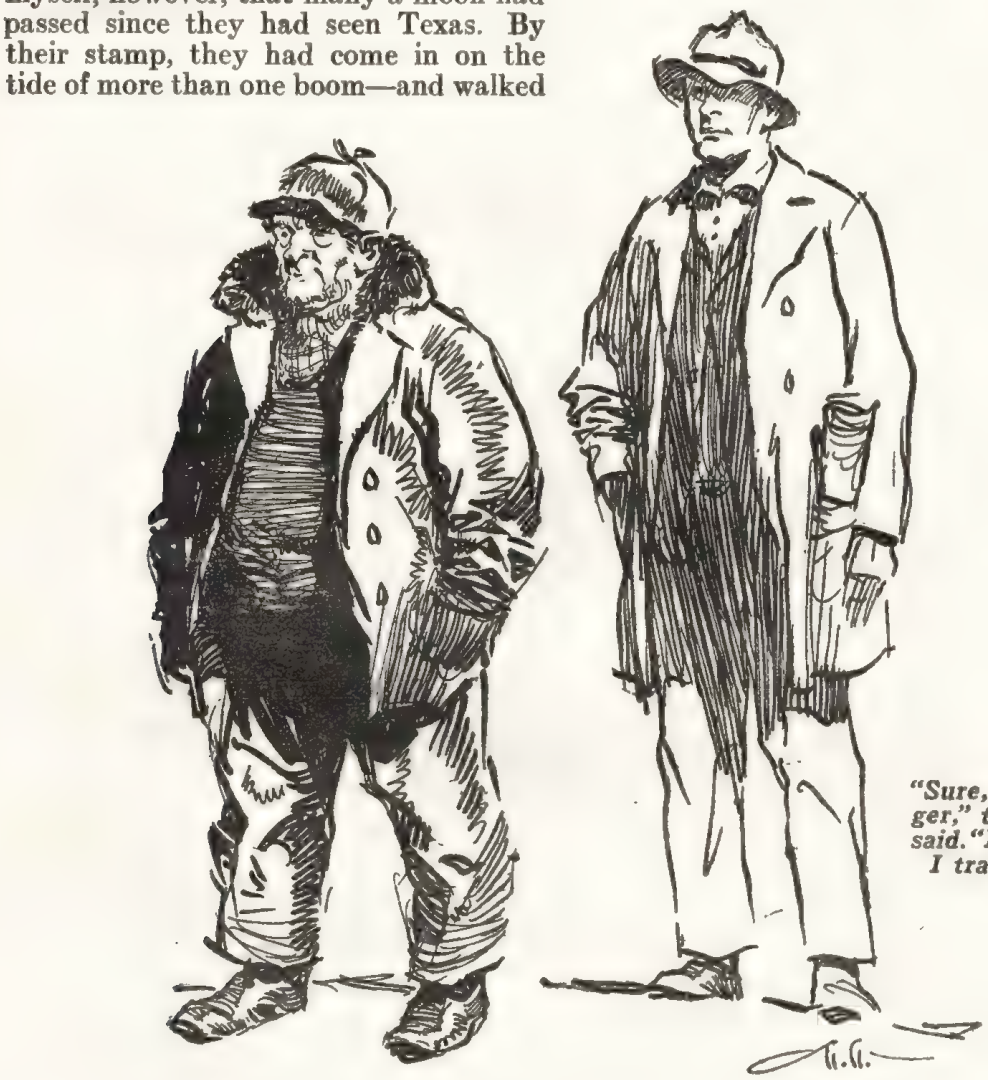
"Me name's Mike Dunning," the older man said. He reached up a hairy hand—for he was six inches shorter than his boy—poked him as if he were a kit

of tools which he took for granted. "This be young Mike. He takes after me. His ma was a smart woman."

Young Mike drew his red brows together in a scowl; he didn't like his old man's talk. Something was eating at him. I caught the air of frustration, even then. Young Mike didn't stand toe to toe with his hairy brute of a father.

I learned they were Texans. I bet to myself, however, that many a moon had passed since they had seen Texas. By their stamp, they had come in on the tide of more than one boom—and walked away under their own power, sticking nowhere long.

Well, they turned to the next day. Good men, too; first class riggers.



"Sure, I'm a rigger," the old man said. "Me b'y, too. I trained 'im."

BARBOUR didn't like either one of 'em, but he hated young Mike most. He couldn't teach 'em a thing; they certainly knew their trade.

Then, too, there was Mary Thelka, red-haired, brown-eyed, with a figure that could carry clothes, and a laughing, bewitching face. Barbour, in the new-found importance of his foreman's status, thought he had her all figured out. I sort of put a crimp in his figurin' though.

Funny—and it made me uneasy that first day, me havin' a boy of my own there in the rigging loft—old Mike never lost any affection on his son. It wasn't as if he was holding it in, either. A fine boy, too, nigh six foot, big-boned, lean, and red-haired like his old man. His blue eyes were dreamy, though, but that didn't spoil him none. Not to say old Mike wasn't a fine man. He was—in every way but that. Something had

warped what should have been his natural affection for young Mike.

Startling, it was, the way young Mike looked like old Mike; yet old Mike was ugly. When young Mike looked at his Pa it was as if he was looking at himself in a mirror—one that distorted him.

Ugly, old Mike was—ugly as a hairy old spider. It seemed as if the bandy legs of him would fold up under his knobby paunch and squat bulk. His powerful arms sided off like as if they was hungry to clutch some poor devil. His eyebrows and ears and the backs of his hands were grizzly with hair; his head, too, red hair, tufted white in spots. Not silky wavy hair like his boy's but coarse stuff like corroded copper wire.

When, next day, Skate-Eye Yontag saw old Mike serving marlin on a double wire ladder, against which he was framed, he poked me. Skate-Eye's spare fleshed, big boned frame shook to his chuckles, until his hair, blond to whiteness, shivered down into his dancing blue eyes. It gave me the shivers, it did, all that stringy hair nigh to blinding him, an' one of them cockeyed skate eyes of his shootin' mirth at me an' t'other eye lookin' off at a ninety-degree angle at old Mike. A Swede, Skate-Eye had been a sailor.

"Damned if the new feller don't look like a pusy devil spider! Look at 'im crawl about that ladder, like as if he be spinnin' a web. A musty old place to spin webs in, too, with so much riggin' about. Eh, Yared?"

Paul Barbour was afraid of spiders. I saw his head jerk when Skate-Eye's raucous voice carried through the loft. He stepped into his office, fast, and closed the door.

There was times when I sort of felt sorry for young Barbour. More times, too, when he burned me up. He wasn't altogether to blame, for the job was too big for him. He'd come by it easy, through the pull of some relative having a say in the management of the plant. He was just thick enough to think that he rated being foreman, not taking into consideration that a few old-timers like me kept the wheels running smoothly. He'd worked in a store, clerking, then he had put in a couple of years as second steward on a coastwise run aboard a collier. He thought them two years went a long way toward makin' him a rigger. He did learn fast, and had become right handy in the inside work in the loft, such as makin' up boat falls, shrouds and stays and such like. I'll give him credit for that. But outside, where real experience was needed, he went to pieces.

As a rule, I spent most of my working hours outside, come rain, snow or shine. Having been foreman in a yard in New York before comin' Down East again, it came natural for me to take charge. What with both cargo ships and destroyers going off the ways each month and a crew of green men to teach —not counting a green foreman to cover up for—I had enough to do. If it wasn't for a couple of old-timers like myself and a couple of deep water seamen like Yontag I'd have had a harder time of it.

Therefore, them two Dunnings, knowin' their trade, was a blessing to me.

THAT night, standing in line before time clock ready to punch out, I had a friendly word with young Mike. Looked lonesome, he did.

"What are you doin' tonight, boy?" I asked. "This is a right cold and lonesome city to one come new to it. How'd you like to come along with me, to my house? My wife'll put a good supper under your belt. My granddaughter's givin' a party tonight. There'll be plenty o' nice girls there."

Young Mike looked pleased. "I'd like to, Mr. Bailey, but Pa—"

"Your pa can come, too." I looked around for old Mike, but he'd punched out. Hadn't even waited for his boy.

"I reckon I hadn't better," young Mike sighed. "When we hit a new place, Pa gets blue. More so'n usual. He says it makes him forget, to keep rollin'. That's why we don't stay anywhere long. I'll tell him, though, but I don't think he'll come. He ain't very sociable, Pa ain't, not since Ma died, they tell me. We'll get room an' board in a place and all he'll do is sit and play solitaire evenings and think o' Ma."

I was disappointed, for I wanted

young Mike to meet Mary Thelka. Young Barbour had his eye on her, and I didn't like it, she havin' a wild streak in her. I'd known her ma and pa, just after the both of 'em had landed here from Poland more'n thirty year ago. They wasn't spliced then and I'd been the means o' bringin' 'em together, for Mary's pa, big Steve Thelka, was a mite wild at that time and doin' himself harm. Mary took after him, she bein' their fifth young'un. I wanted her to get a good man, before she had a chance to cut up foolish like Steve did.

I ain't noticed much around home. So when the party came off that night it wasn't anything unusual for me to be walked on and sat on and waded over just like I was a door mat or a foot stool. Just a shrunk-up old feller with a bald conk, a jib of a nose and weak eyes.

Along about nine o'clock Skate-Eye showed up.

"Yust dropped in for a game o' cribbage. Eh, Yared?"

"Ye got wind there'd be a few young craft droppin' their dainty ankles here for a while, ye old tom cod. Don't you deep-water men ever get any age on you?"

Skate-Eye's mouth dropped in a vacuous grin. I knew that he didn't come just to play cards. His cock eyes were swiveling so fast in their sockets, takin' in all them girls, that I got plumb dizzy watching him.

We hadn't any more'n got set down than I heard a deep voice in the hall ask: "Is Mr. Jared Bailey home, miss?"

"Glad to see you, young feller," I said, looking out of the kitchen at Mike Dunning. "The funny lookin' blond girl with the pants on is my granddaughter Sally. Steer him around, Sally.

"Pa said he had a lot of figurin' to do. So I struck off for your place. It's only about seven blocks," said young Mike. Against a blue serge suit his ruddy face and red hair was set off fine.

"Say, Mary—Mary Thelka!" Sally called. "We got a twin brother for you."

Mary came out of the parlor in a rush, but she stopped quick enough when she saw young Mike. It was the first time I'd seen her Polish brown eyes smolder when she looked at a man.

They were a world apart, those two; yet they clicked at once.

WHILE they were standing there in the hall, Paul Barbour came in. I felt sorry for the poor feller; his clothes would have struck out the band. The light on all them clashing colors damn nigh come to blindin' me.

Skate-Eye stuck his long neck out over my shoulder. Seeing Barbour in his flashy new outfit, he batted his eyes enviously; he liked colors, Yontag did.

"My Aunt Yudith!" he cackled. "Yuh ain't plannin' on gettin' married, be yuh, Paul? Don't yuh shine, boy!"

Barbour jerked his head, pleased as all get out.

"You ready, Mary?" he asked. "We'll go out to the Onyx for a beer, then take in a dance."

"Why I—" Mary Thelka hesitated, her dark eyes flashing to young Mike's face. Them level blue eyes of Mike's was sayin' "No!" "Let's stay here, Paul," Mary said, with finality. "It's too cold out tonight. Looks like snow, anyway."

Sally tittered, her saucy features all screwed up in a grimace. She nudged young Mike with her elbow. Paul flushed, angrily.

"But you said, Mary—" Barbour snapped. He pulled her toward him.

She tried to shake her shoulder free.

Young Mike was uncomfortable, I noticed. "The girl says 'no'," he said.

"How'd you get here, fella?" Barbour snapped, flashing a contemptuous look at him.

"I get around."

"You'd better be out lookin' after your old man. I just passed him staggering around on the sidewalk—drunk."

"It's his game knee," young Mike said. The little web of lines was tightening at the corners of his eyes. "Pa don't drink; not since Ma died."

"Get your coat on, Mary!" Barbour spoke to the girl roughly. "The car can't idle out there all night. I had to fight to get eight gallons of gas."

"I'm not going," she whispered, upset now.

Young Barbour was making close to four hundred a month. Boom wages. Bein' foreman, he was big time in our small city. He didn't care to remember that his father's been a clam digger, and a poor one at that. Aye—young Barbour was ridin' high.

I didn't realize how big a wrist young Mike had until he lifted his hand against Barbour, to push him away from Mary. Brown, sinewy, it looked five inches across, that wrist did.

Barbour staggered back. He was caught by old Mike as one of the girls opened the door to his knock.

Not knowing what he faced, old Mike's hairy paws tightened over Barbour's shoulders, sinking deep into the purple-toned overcoat. Barbour stretched his neck so that he could look at those remorseless talons, then around into the hairy face. His thin lips grayed; fear and loathing played in his eyes.

Old Mike read that look. He glanced quickly toward his boy, as he feared seeing the same thing reflected there. His eyes burned. He looked sick, he did, sick and old and lonely.

"Why'd you leave me, Michael?" he asked, his voice rusty.

"A lot you care whether I leave or stay," young Mike returned, bitterly.

"Well, your ma—fine woman that she was—made me promise that I'd look after ye," old Mike said. The rusty timber of his voice was gritty now.

Young Mike flinched.

It came to me, then, that old Mike was holding something against his boy.

"Oh!" Mary gasped. She laid a hand lightly on young Mike's sleeve, looked at old Mike. "You hurt him."

Barbour wrenched himself loose, and fled. Old Mike, without another word, buttoning his shabby sheepskin coat, left, also. But I'd caught the cloudy flecks in his eyes when he saw Mary Thelka lay a hand on young Mike's sleeve. Just as if a flood was about to carry him under.

THE next few weeks were trying ones. Sleet and ice and cold. We'd won the coveted navy "E", and were all proud to wear the gold and blue and white emblem, a ship set in a ring of thirteen stars. Aye—proud, down to the lowliest clean-up man. It meant work, though, to get them ships out; work to try a man's soul.

Young Mike—nights and Sundays when we had no overtime—was seeing considerable of Mary Thelka, and I was glad.

Old Mike was disgruntled to ugliness because of it. And Barbour's temper hadn't improved any. On top of seein' Mary slipping from him, he was havin' trouble with the local draft board, but the management was able to get him deferred by calling him a necessary man. That was a laugh.

It got so that Barbour's chief interest in life was hounding young Mike, seeing to it that he got all the dirty and dangerous jobs. Not that young Mike minded, but they's times when a job's too dangerous to handle because of weather conditions.

I was uneasy. One of these days, I felt, there'd be just another accident, and young Mike might be among the missing.

So, one Saturday morning I took old Mike outside, down to hull 301 in the water at the east dock. She was an eight thousand ton cargo ship, about finished.

"From now on ye're workin' outside, Mike, near your boy—so's ye can keep an eye on him." I had to shout in Mike's hairy ear, the chippers, riveters and welders was makin' such a racket slapping the finishing touches to that ship. "See that snapped topping-lift block, that bent boom, and that crack in the deck them welders is joining?"

Old Mike's hard features caught the purplish flare of a welder's arc as he looked up.

I pointed. "Well, last night when your boy had to work overtime on a boom test an' you didn't, our bright foreman give him a set of false load weights to work by. Whether he meant them figures to leave the office without checkin' on 'em, or not, I dunno. He claimed, later, that it was a mistake on the clerk's part. All departments is makin' enough honest ones, God knows, without any phoney ones bein' shoved off on

us for mad measure. Anyway, Mike tested the boom with a load of eight ton; goin' by Barbour's figures, understand. The boom stood it, sure, because them booms is rigged to take five ton, with an overload of two ton, makin' seven, maximum. On top of the eight, however, in good faith, he had the test gang put on the overload, three more ton—makin' eleven ton of solid lead in the test bucket! When the test gang riz 'er, then snapped 'er, everying broke loose at once. For a minute I calculate they thought the bottom had dropped plumb out o' hell."

Old Mike swallowed, blinked his rust-colored eyes. "Me b'y never said," he grated.

I prodded him with a finger. "That broken wire that ye was pawin' this mornin' just cleared your boy's neck by inches when it snapped off'n the winch drum, they tell me."

Old Mike's eyes burned. "A born rigger goes by feel, not by what some fool tells him," he choked, and whether it was from the gas spewing up from the welding rods, or from any real feelin' he had for his young 'un, I couldn't tell. I hoped it was his feelin' gettin' the best of him.

"If Mike can't handle his work—" His voice hardened.

"But the boy ain't himself, man. He's in love!"

"Hell!" Old Mike spat, and turned away.

"Ain't ye got ary bit o' feelin'?" I cried, exasperated.

"Shuddup!" old Mike rasped. His eyes burned into mine.

"But—"

"Ye're an old man," old Mike said. Ugly, he was. "I could crack ye in two wid one hand. Mind your own business, ye auld fool!"

That burnt me up, it did. I left old Mike in a huff, and went aboard hull 313, a destroyer, where I'd left young Mike on a safe job splicing in life nets along the waterways. It wasn't too cold, a nice day, with a bit o' sun breakin' through the snow clouds.

He was sitting there, contented like, on a box, splicing in diamonds in the netting around a stern chock. His mind wasn't on his work, I saw; he was staring dreamily at an ice floe grinding its way down river. I chuckled. He looked up, brushed a wisp of red hair under his cap with a tarry finger.

I waited until a test gang had dropped an ash can over the stern, trying out the depth charge runways. Then I asked: "What ails your pa, boy? What is it he holds ag'in ye? You two have been here several weeks now, and I can't see as he treats ye halfway decent. It seems cruel."

"Pa ain't meaning to be cruel," young Mike defended, scooping a bit of tallow from the grease horn hanging from his rigging belt. "The old man don't realize it, but he's always held it against me because Ma died a few days after I was born, me being the cause of it. He was rigging in a lonely place then, in Alaska, an' they'd both had a hard winter."

"I'd think your pa'd think all the more of ye because of it."

Young Mike became wistful. "There's times I think he does, but mostly I reckon he don't. If I knew for sure—Well, I'd enlist."

About three minutes to four that evening, as we was finishin' up for the day, waitin' for the whistle, there was a general let-down in the loft. As it was so near knocking-off time we all felt there'd be no work Sunday. Then Barbour came out of his tiny office.

"Three thirty in the morning," he said, with a thin smile.

LIKE tired ghosts we walked by the guards next morning, through spitting snow, into the yard to the time clocks. In the loft we gathered up a few lines, shackles, blocks and tackles and such gear, and struck out for hull 301. Double time don't look so good to a man at three o'clock of a Sunday morning after he's put in a long hard week.

Well, we had the jumbo boom to rig and test. After that we'd have to shuffle the hulls around at flood tide that afternoon so's a couple of the dock cranes could put a condenser into a destroyer. Standing there on a boom table, I looked down to what I could see of the river.

Looked grim, it did, as if 'twas bent on war business. We'd sent a lot of ships down to baptism in the sea in 1940, '41, and '42.

In the glare of the spotlight of a dock crane, Skate-Eye Yontag was standing on number five hatch; he was shivering so from the cold that his cock eyes was a ghastly sight.

"Shake a leg, Skate-Eye!" I chided. "Let's get this jumbo boom rigged. That'll warm ye up, seein' as how ye ain't accustomed to such exertion. And put a stopper on them eyes o' yourn before I lose my breakfast."

"A sailorman be better off to sea these days, by Yudith!" Skate-Eye wailed. By means of a gantling, he began passing a temporary guy up to a man on the maintop.

The snow was wet on my cheek; it was driving in harder now from the northeast. I heard old Mike damning his boy because he'd let a snubbed line slip an inch because of the snow. I turned to look at the old rigger, standing there by a bitt. He was squinting aloft, trying to penetrate the thickening murk. The up turned collar of his sheepskin, and the grizzled hair of his eyebrows and ears was white with snow feathers. From the monstrous girth of him sagged his gear belt, holding sheathed knife, sheathed wire nippers, and on his left hip a fourteen-inch marlin spike gleamed as he turned.

My gorge rose. He had no feelings that man; none at all for his boy. Descending from the boom table, I stepped toward Yontag.

"Hear the old devil, Skate-Eye," I said, motioning toward old Mike. "Berating his boy. And this early of a Sunday morning. Ashamed, he ought to be ashamed. And him too mean and selfish to favor the lad's marrying Mary Thelka. A finer girl there never was."

I calculate I must've touched the wrong spring. I'd clean forgot how sentimental a bachelor seaman can be. Skate-Eye took it plumb to heart, he did.

A tricky job, rigging the jumbo boom in that smother. When not in use it rests in a collar parallel with the mainmast. It's only used for handling heavy stuff such as war tanks and locomotives.

One of the helpers was having trouble aloft, and old Mike started up.

"You're a devil, Mike Dunning! A devil spider!" Yontag startled us all by suddenly chanting. His voice carried upward with the storm. "A pusy red spider keeping your boy in a web."

That sudden chanting caught old Mike midway up the steel ladder of the mast. He stopped. For a full minute he didn't turn; but when he did, his face, webbed by swirling snow, was drawn up in a twisted pattern.

"Stop that infernal dirge, Skate-Eye!" I bade, for I saw old Mike was suffering. Skate-Eye had torn him to the quick.

Barbour had come up in time to catch the expression on old Mike's face but, because of his superficial nature, he read it wrong. He thought old Mike was looking at him. With an involuntary shudder he stepped quickly away from the boom table.

"That man's dangerous," he said, stiff lipped. "He's after me!"

"You must have a guilty conscience, Paul," I couldn't refrain from saying, disgusted. He give me a cold look and I knew he was chalking that remark ag'in me.

AFTER three hours of slippery, wet work, we finally got the big boom rigged. We lowered it and guyed it outboard over the dock where the test load rested, a steel ten-foot-square bucket filled with thirty ton of lead bars. A mean load. With an anxious ear I heard the winch on the boom table groan when we buckled hold. The boom heaved. The ship listed. I had men standing at the mooring hawsers, but I cast a quick glance between ship and dock.

We got it up and aboard and set it down amidships on the hatch. Then we got the guys shackled in a different arrangement to swing the load outboard over the river. That done and the load swung down to the dock again would complete the test.

I had an eye out for young Mike. He'd climbed the load to make fast another strap to the hook. Reckless, he

was. And Barbour was baiting him. Mike hooked in the strap, was about to jump down—when Barbour started to lift the load. I raised the flat of my palm toward Barbour at the winch controls, giving him the stop signal.

"Afraid to ride the load?" Barbour gibed, mockingly. "I thought you were a rigger!"

Young Mike went to get off the load, but it was too much of a drop, now. Barbour, ignoring my signal with a foreman's prerogative, kept lifting, hand on the winch lever.

Dawn was slow in coming, account of the storm. Where the spotlights on the cranes, and the cluster lamps on the ship didn't reach, there were pockets of blackness.

The man at the inboard guy, thinking young Mike intended riding the load, slacked away. The great boom swung, with its heavy load, far out over the river.

Old Mike had long since come down off the mast. It was the first time I'd seen him when he wasn't alert. He was doddering like. A bewildered look crossed the wet shine of his face. He acted like a man who was waking up, confused. I calculate Yontag's crazy chanting had balanced the wheels in his head, sort of yanked him out of too much thinking of the past. Then he stood stockstill, stared at young Mike out there over the river high on the swaying load.

"Don't move, Michael!" he shouted, in an anguished tone. Then he squinted at Barbour at the winch, and said to me in a confidential undertone: "I can't trust that man. He's not used to operating."

He was right. Barbour never had handled a winch but a couple of times. I was anxious, too.

"You handle the load, Mike," I soothed.

Old Mike started toward the ladder leading up to the boom table. His face was set in a hard mask as he climbed up beside Barbour. I guess Barbour must've thought old Mike was after him for not letting young Mike off the load.

Surfaced Track

SUMMER sunlight on the iron; the dry rustle of grasshopper wings; tie-bars clicking a warning for the *Limited*. The section gang steps clear and while a hundred train-wheels beat their plaudits at the joints, a slow grin creases the kingsnipe's face. The track has been brought to surface.

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RAILROAD MAGAZINE

205 E. 42nd St., N. Y. City

He got scared and rattled; his hand froze to the lever.

I was damn nigh paralyzed, then, myself. Thirty ton of lead! We all stared at it. It kept rising into the maw of darkness above the river, snow lacing past it like broken strings of confetti. Young Mike's face was only a white blob, now.

The ship listed more heavily. Mooring hawsers groaned against the tremendous strain, for that ship was light, a mere shell.

"Stop 'er!" I cried. I jumped toward the boom table.

Like a huge spider, old Mike pounced at the winch control. Barbour shrieked.

Old Mike was a second too late. The great falls of the jumbo boom ground into each other—two blocks. The hauling part of the steel runner snapped. Broken wire whined through whirring sheaves. Thirty ton of lead plunged into the river. The tide was running strong, carrying ice. The ship came on an even keel with a whoosh, rolled.

Old Mike was flung outward when the flaying cable whipped back. He fell to the well deck, lay still; a hard fall for so heavy a man.

I jumped to the side of the trembling ship, a twenty fathom end of line in my hand, ready to throw it to young Mike. I looked down into the swirling water where the test box had sunk, saw nothing. Had the suction carried young Mike to the bottom, or had the tide taken him downstream?

Someone dropped lightly to my side, having come down the preventer guy. I stared at him, blankly.

"I saw it coming," young Mike gulped. "I rode the up falls, swung up to the topping lift, and hung on—just in time."

"Your pa—" I mumbled.

FROM the first-aid rooms I had the still unconscious old rigger taken to my house.

"It's touch and go," the doctor said, with a shake of his gray head and a beady glance at me out of his sharp blue eyes.

I turned to young Mike. "Has your pa any folks besides you?"

"Yes," young Mike said, dry voiced. "A brother and a sister. I don't know where, though. Likely his personal papers—"

I sent my boy to their boarding house after their things. After he came back, I left young Mike all alone in a spare room. It wasn't long before he came to me, some papers in his hand. He looked a mite ashamed, he did—and pleased as could be.

"Do you think Pa'll pull out of it?" he choked.

"Old riggers are tough," I said. "Tough as all get out."

"I reckon Pa thought more of me than he let on," young Mike said. "Look here."

He held out a couple of life insurance policies and a bankbook. I reached for 'em. Curious, I was. Each policy was for ten thousand dollars—young Mike the beneficiary. The old dog-eared bankbook was in young Mike's name, old Mike's name on the margin as trustee; it's first entry was for one dollar made about the time young Mike was a year old; the last entry was dated three months before. The total sum was $11,009.71.

As I said before, there were times when I felt sorry for Paul Barbour. He never could seem to strike the right tune in dealing with folks. Yet he struck the right chord in the end, for he enlisted in the navy, leaving a recommendation with the management that young Mike Dunning be made foreman.

Things move fast in this war.

Young Mike wasn't foreman more'n a week when it began to look like he might be drafted. So he enlisted in the navy. Based on his status as a master rigger, he got a fine rating.

Old Mike was on the mend by now. Aye! Tough, he was. Yet his spirit as well as his body had been humbled, I guess. One evening, before young Mike left, he raised his shapeless hulk on an elbow, laid a hand against his boy's face.

"I'll write ye every week, b'y," he croaked, in his rusty voice. "Don't worry about me an' Mary—we'll look after each other. Eh, Mrs. Michael Dunning?"

"Sure, we will, Mike," Mary said, misty-eyed.

THE CAMP-FIRE

Where readers, writers and adventurers meet

WE thought we'd left ourselves ample elbow room here this month to sweep up the carpet of stray chips that have been accumulating about the fringes of the fire for some time; reserved extra minutes to split a little kindling and stack it neatly next to the unseasoned wood for future fueling purposes and still have seconds to spare for nursing the current blaze. But damned if said current blaze, instead of just smoldering pleasantly along with only an occasional twig from the fire-tender needed to keep the heat coming, hasn't developed into a full-fledged conflagration all on its own. Far from needing additional fuel we've had to cut fire-lanes to keep it from scorching over into the advertising pages.

Four recruits to the ranks of the Writers' Brigade are lined up waiting to be heard and several members of the Old Guard insist on having their say. It's an interesting "say" moreover, so we'll step aside and let them have the stump.

R. (Ralph) A. Emberg, whose "Phantom Caravel" is the first of a series of Great Lakes stories we plan to publish, writes—

> For three and a half centuries the Great Lakes, their tributaries and interwaterways, and their shipping have been the core of a fascinating history, a history that remains largely to be recorded, except where it has been incidental to the general history of the United States and the Dominion of Canada. Why this is so I cannot say. There has certainly been enough history made on the Great Lakes. Voyageurs, sailors, traders and soldiers, yes, even pirates, have lived high adventure on the sweetwater oceans. Yet, writers of both fact and fiction have ignored them. No freshwater Richard Dana, no American Joseph Conrad has ever tried to dramatize them.
>
> Everybody has read of Drake, Morgan, Kidd, Blackbeard, the famous or infamous freebooters of saltwater, but who has ever heard of Anton Louis Marie Demarest, whose feats on sweetwater equalled the greatest exploits of the saltwater buccaneers? Most of us have read of the swift Yankee clippers, the teaships, the rounding of the Horn, the renowned saltwater argosies, etc., but I very much doubt if there are many Americans who know that in the year 1868 there were one thousand, eight hundred and fifty sailing vessels on our own inland seas, among them some of finest sailing craft in the world, including the largest and swiftest bark to ever fly the American Flag.
>
> The clipper races on saltwater, yes,

even the steamboat races on the Mississippi and the Hudson are known to most of us, but what about the races on the Great Lakes, when with the opening of spring navigation the fleets of sweetwater clippers with gleaming canvas, freshly holystoned decks, varnish-slicked spars and glistening paintwork set out to sea on the first run of the season? Or the steamer races, that epic classic between the *Jean Duluth* and the *Pere Marquette* when ice, dynamite, fists and boots were used by the rival crews?

Anthologies of saltwater chanties have been published. *Blow the man down* has been set to swing music, but not yet, so far as I know, has *The Cruise of the Bigerlow,* a Great Lakes chanty been put in print. This song with many others, was sung as the sweetwater sailors tramped the windlass and capstan round; they are real American folk-songs, but they remain uncollected and bid fair to die unrecorded.

In "The Phantom Caravel" I have adhered closely to historical facts, although using the license of a fictioneer to fill in gaps. I have explained the loss of the vessel through the journal (fictitious) of the Englishman, John Harkness. Actually, neither the *Griffon* nor her crew were ever heard from again after she sailed from Green Bay in September, 1679. But the French suspected that English or Dutch traders from New York had been instrumental in her disappearance. For a time LaSalle was inclined to that theory. While there is no reasonable doubt in my mind that the *Griffon* foundered in a storm in Lake Michigan, my solution through the journal of Harkness is not at all impossible.

About myself—I'm a squarehead, third and fourth generation Swede, with a yen for the sea and ships. I first made the acquaintance of *Adventure,* Vol. 1, No. 1, (Nov. 1910) a long time ago, and I have been an off and on member of *Camp-Fire* ever since, first as a reader, and now a contributor. But to get back to Vol. 1, No. 1, I bought it at a newstand in Buffalo, N. Y., and took it back to my ship with me. We cleared for Cleveland next morning and ran into one of those twisters Lake Erie is famous, or infamous for. Three days we lay outside the breakwall waiting for the weather to moderate so we could get in, and that copy of the first *Adventure* came in mighty handy. I'm sorry I can't remember the authors, I was only a kid, but I do remember the magazine and its editor, Arthur Sullivant Hoffman. *(Mr. Hoffman, who still receives his copy of Adventure each month, edited our magazine from Nov. 1911 to June 1927. He was on the staff from the very beginning. Ed.)*

I've been here and there quite a bit, and I've done almost everything, or at least I've tried my hand at it, including teaching school. I know from what I've read in *Camp-Fire* that *Adventure* readers are a choosy lot where their fiction is concerned, which is why I am now going on record. I know a great deal about the Great Lakes, the history of their shipping, etc., and I've done considerable research, *but I am not in a million years setting myself up as an infallible Great Lakes historian.* I don't know a tenth of it, and by the same token I am not an authority on things nautical. True, in addition to several years on the lakes, I went to sea. I've made several voyages in windjammers (schooners), but the less said about those unhappy episodes the better. It is more than remotely possible that I have made, and will continue to make in my writing, technical boners. I can only hope that editors and readers will be lenient.

I sold my first story in 1934, and since then have appeared in a variety of magazines including *Harper's Travel, Readers' Digest* and *Story.*

I have known a few *Adventure* authors. Ed (E. Hoffmann) Price is an old friend and also one of my severest critics. Albert Richard (Dickie) Wetjen and Norbert Davis are also acquaintances. I'd like to ramble on, but, well, let's call it modesty, prevents me. If my Great Lakes yarns spark any inquisitive soul, I'll be glad to answer questions to the best of my ability. And I sincerely hope that I may continue to sit at *Camp-Fire,* both as a writer and a reader.

So do we, quick to add our hope that Naval Procurement, where Mr. Emberg is currently struggling to hasten the war effort, gives him a minute now and then to "relax" at his typewriter. We have on hand other of his stories, scheduled to appear soon—"The Phantom Caravel" is the first in a collection, later to be published in book form, which will tell the story of the Great Lakes ships and sailormen from earliest times down to the present—but the stockpile won't last indefinitely.

Incidentally, we think Author Emberg is unduly modest in his embarrassment over the possibility of technical errors creeping into his copy. Gordon Grant,

who illustrated the tale, and who is by way of being something of a court of last appeal on matters maritime, found only one very minor error in the history of the *Griffon*, and then decided that it was typographical rather than nautical after all!

GENE HENRY, best known perhaps for her "Miss Bronska" stories which have been running currently in SEP, has watched our magazine "from the other side of the fence" for a good many years, even as Mr. Emberg. She writes—

Walking in between the covers of *Adventure* is like walking into a room full of old friends.

Years ago I spent some time in the far interior of British Columbia. There I learned three things. I learned to run a trap line; I learned to make sour-dough flap-jacks; and I learned that *Adventure* magazine is the trappers' and prospectors' Bible. And I learned why.

After weeks with nothing to read, I unearthed, in an abandoned cabin, a twelve-year-old, rat-eaten, moldy copy of *Adventure*. I devoured it from cover to cover, backward and forward. I smacked my lips over its flavor, and took time out to be astonished that its stories do not go out of date with time. Perhaps that is because adventure itself is a dueling sword constantly sharpened by circumstances—either real or imaginary.

I know exactly how jealous the old-timers are that every outdoor detail of *Adventure's* stories be authentic. I have seen one hurl a magazine that baited a mink trap with bacon instead of "fish-stink." I knew the man who lit the fire the way Olaf had to.

I am very grateful, and not a little humble at having a story of mine in the trappers' Bible.

Those are m i g h t y heartwarming words, Miss Henry, and don't think we don't appreciate 'em, from the oldest-timer on down. Come call again—any time at all!

COMMANDER Geoffrey Lyttelton Lowis, RN, like so many naval officers we've encountered lately, would rather talk about anything under the sun but himself. It was all we could do to get him to knock out the following succinct account of his personal career. If it reads more like an official Admiralty report blame the commander—not us. We did our damndest!

Born 1896 in Yorkshire, England. Educated at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Went to sea 1913. Sailed all through World War I in battleships, destroyers and airships. Mentioned in dispatches and awarded Air Force Cross. Spent a year at Oxford after the war and then became member of London Stock Exchange.

Appointed to a ship 2.00 a.m. September 3rd, 1939, was in a train joining her when war declared, 11.00 a.m. Spent 2½ years patrolling and escorting convoys in North Atlantic; now at Washington. Tried and failed to write a story in the last war. Tried again this war, and enjoy it—writing, NOT the war. Have an American wife and four children.

THE author of "The Devil Spider" knows what he's writing about when he spins a yarn of the men who rig the ships that go down to the sea in wartime. Francis Gott takes time off for a minute from infinitely more important things to send us the following—

Eighteen months ago a man of 33 struck out one September morning from the small fishing village on the Maine coast where he lives and a few hours later was seeking admission for an interview as a ship rigger in one of New England's largest war industries. Accepted as a second class rigger's helper, having had rigging experience in other shipyards and on ships of different kinds, he was turned over to a first class rigger of mountainous proportions. The man mountain, height 6 feet 3 or 4 inches, weight 280 pounds and no fat, took his new helper aboard a new cargo ship about ready to nose down the river on her first trip. Their job finished, the man mountain began decking his broad shoulders, back and arms with rigging gear to take back to the rigging loft—a large hawser, several wire straps, blocks and tackle, heavy chain falls, and numerous other items. Comfortably ballasted to the tune of several hundred pounds he looked about him at the chippers, burners, welders, carpenters, and other iron workers and his broad face broke into an affable smile. "Now one of you fellows tie a broom to my tail and I'll

sweep the deck," he said. Ex-coast-guardsman, ex-deep water bos'n, ex-municipal cop, the big man's name was Furber Davis. His new helper's name was Francis Gott.

Since then I've been promoted several grades from helper to full rigger and now have a gang of my own. *(But can you carry a load like that? Ed.)*

Prior to this, neutrality legislation having thrown thousands of seamen out of work, I was forced to leave New York and a quartermaster's berth, and come home to Maine. Somewhat dubiously, I took an instructor's job with the CCC, and for eighteen months taught C-men seamanship and coastwise navigation, serving with three companies in three widely separated parts of the state. I felt like an exile so far from salt water, but I learned much from army officers, and secured story material from the antics of Maine Arabs and Frenchmen who didn't know their own strength.

In the late 20's and early 30's I put in some five or six years as able seaman, quartermaster and bos'n on deep water ships. As a boy of fourteen, fifteen and sixteen went out with the Maine trawlers to the fishing banks, for I was brought up on Swan's Island where the chief business was fishing. My people had been one of the half dozen families to first settle on the island before the American Revolution.

A full year's service as A. B. on a certain cargo ship hitting West and North African, and southern European ports, and Turkish, Roumanian and Russian ports in the Black Sea, will stand out in my memory, for during that time I had to keep pace with a tall, stoop-shouldered bos'n, a confirmed kleptomaniac of things he thought might be useful on the ship. He had blazing blue eyes, a great beak of a broken nose; he hailed from Utah or Idaho. Once he got me out in the middle of the night to help him swing aboard a set of heavy railroad wheels. Maybe he thought we could build a track on the deck. Next morning when the chief mate, an ex-navy officer, surveyed the after well-deck with a jaundiced and critical eye, his jaw dropped when he saw those wheels lashed against the bulwarks. He roared at the bos'n. The crestfallen and misjudged bos'n had to get those wheels back to the railroad tracks before the railroad found out. Another time he got me to help him stagger up the gangway with a great steel plate burnt out of the bottom of some ship. We were on drydock then. What happened to the plate I don't know. The long suffering mate probably got him to put it back. Once, during a cold night in New York, he dragged me out of a warm bunk to help him lower a number of cases of booze. Where he'd kept the stuff hidden is a mystery I've never been able to puzzle out, for forty customs officers had gone over the ship with a fine toothed comb, had even sifted the sand we had for scrubbing decks. "My Lord, bos'n!" I growled. "There's two customs officers standing by the gangway with guns." "They're after dope, b'y," he said. "Not whiskey." But I noticed he got that whiskey over the side in record time. It was for an official of the company. A year or so after I left that ship, I learned from a former shipmate that the mate had finally fired the bos'n when he stole a big gangway from a passenger ship and her skipper couldn't get aboard.

I guess I am running on too long. I was born in Brooklyn, New York in a furnished room of a Maine sea captain father and a Nova Scotian mother. My earliest memory is of myself as a small boy sleeping in a hammock swung over the skylight of one of my father's ships.

I have a wife, three children, an Airdale, two cats, 24 hens and one Brahma rooster. As partial proof that I am not altogether wacky I can show a degree from New York University with my name on it.

I'd like to dedicate "The Devil Spider" to Elihu Fullerton, rigging foreman, and his gang of riggers, who have helped send a good many battle wagons down the river to the navy yards. These men, wearing the Navy "E," don't growl at a 48 hour week; all too frequently they work a 60, 70, and even 80 hour week in hastening the end of the war.

Keep 'em sliding down the ways, mister, till the big job's done. And if you can squeeze out a yarn or two between ships— Well, we'd like that too.

LESLIE T. WHITE'S name first appeared on our contents page a couple of years ago with a serial set in Tierra del Fuego. His next story jumped a few thousand miles due north to the Ontario wilderness. Now he's back again in the South American hinterlands. We haven't the faintest idea where he'll land next except that we're sure it won't be in his

own back yard—which happens to be California.

Of his new novel which begins this month and winds up in the August issue Mr. White writes—

Since "East of the Williwaw" was laid at the bottom of the world, and "5000 Trojan Horses," at the top, it seemed fitting, in order to avoid repetition, to lay this one somewhere between the two, and nowhere on this old globe is there a more perfect locale for adventure than Brazil's fabulous Mato Grosso.

This particular story was conceived in an editorial office; accidentally conceived, not planned. With blustery winter winds blowing and the East River kicking up a nasty chop, the editor lay back in his chair, dreaming. Parenthically, editors do dream, you know. They are romantic fellows, who glean a lot of weird and interesting facts and rumors. Talk turned to far, offtrail places, and eventually worked around to the jungles and campos of the Mato Grosso. Talk of the legendary vampire bat, of the old Long Horn cattle such as once roamed the Texas plains and are now supposedly extinct; of bandits who are half-saint, half-devil; of gauchos sipping their *maté* around campfires. And when I admitted that my first attempt to reach the Mato Grosso had concluded disastrously the previous year, the editor turned a jaundiced and accusing eye on me, as if in some way, I was guilty of falling down on my job. (Editors are never satisfied, you know!) And so—I stowed my gear aboard a Clipper plane, flew to Rio, and took the little red and yellow train that carried me nearly two thousand miles into that great wilderness land—the Mato Grosso!

What a place! And what a people! Those Americans who have visited Rio de Janeiro, for all its beauty, charm and culture, have never seen Brazil—the real Brazil—any more than a Brazilian who visited New York would have seen the United States of North America. For Brazil is nearly a quarter of a million square miles larger than continental United States, and even more varied. It's a wonderful country—all of it. Much of it is modern, as modern as our own country, but the Mato Grosso is still one of the last frontiers. And yet, though primitive, is very old and rich in tradition.

There was a day, a few years ago, when a writer buried himself in his "Ivory Tower" and after reading a few travel books, concocted his own mythical locales. *(Not in* Adventure, *pal! Ed.)* Those days are gone, and today the writing of fiction has become almost straight reporting. Obviously I didn't take seven bulls to Paradise Valley, nor did I marry the lovely Mariana, with "the hair like midnight and a star in each eye," but I *did* travel the route taken by "Randy Dent"; I did cross the *Corrego do Boi Mocho,* the Creek of the Ox With the Cut Horns, which teemed with *Piranhas,* and I did ford the Pass of the Monkeys across the Guarani Frontier into Paraguay, and so on. And became addicted to *yerba maté* and now, in mid-morning, I brew a gourd of it and sip as I write. And the passages of descriptive narrative in the serial are lifted verbatim from my notes of the trip.

It is strange what marvelous friendships one develops in those far outposts of the world. Sasha Siemel, the famous Tiger-Man, hero of "Green Hell," was worth the trip itself. Sasha, handsome, daring, has lived to see himself a legend already. And probably this story could not have been written without the help of Father Thomas X. Rowan and Father Francis Mohr, two American priests who live down by the Guarani Border. The fact that I was not of their religion made no difference to these men, and it was in company with Father Rowan that I rode the wild campo and learned to watch out for the dangerous armadillo holes. And for a ready-made character, I offer you big, bluff Father Mohr, a massive man about six three, with a short gray mane and the physique of a wrestler. *Viva,* Padre Mohr!

While a writer is obligated to get his facts straight, there are, unfortunately flaws apt to creep into any story. Especially with dialect and language. To save cluttering up the mails, I'll anticipate one squawl from those who learn their languages in school—re some of my localisms, such as the "Bom dia" which is correct for "Good Day." However, in the Mato Grosso, folks often use the words "Bons dias," which, if it affronts the purists, is nevertheless used colloquially. And while the Brazilians speak Portuguese, recently they made some changes in the spelling, deleting extra letters. For example: *Mato* used to be spelled *Matto,* and so on. The language and expressions used in this serial were not lifted from a text book, but were learned and checked on the ground.

If any errors have crept by me, I apologize in advance. So be it.

A word about Latin American bandits: There is a local bandit in the Mato Grosso known as *O Bicho das Sete Cabecas*, the Beast of the Seven Heads, but (perhaps luckily) I did not make his acquaintance. Manoel Silva is therefore a composite of other bandits I have known, or known of. However, the Latin bandit cannot be dismissed as a mere murdering robber. He's seldom a gangster. Often he is a revolutionary, not against the federal government, but against some localized oppression. He is the modern embodiment of Robin Hood, fighting power and special privilege, not for gain, but for his people. Usually he is hated by foreigners, but that still doesn't make him wrong in principle. And long years after he has been stoned to death and his bones cleaned by the urubus, he is elevated to a sort of local sainthood, and with good reason.

I can see now that I'm not going to live long enough to re-visit all the faraway places I've seen, and loved, renew acquaintance with all the friends I've made back of beyond. But I keep hoping so instead of saying "good-bye," I'll just put it *"até logo,"* which means: "So long, I'll be seeing you soon."

"Gracas a Deus! Thanks be to God!"

"FIGHTING Cadetship of the Confederacy" is the second excerpt from H. G. Russell's forthcoming book, "The Story of the Confederate Navy," which we have had the pleasure of publishing in *Adventure*. "Devil Dogs of Dixie," the story of the Confederate Marine Corps, you will recall from the Dec. '42 issue. This seems a good spot to interpolate an interesting comment on that article, and Mr. Russell's answer to it, before giving you some additional notes on the current piece. After reading about the Dixie leathernecks T. J. Johnstone, a long familiar figure here at *Camp-Fire* down through the years, wrote the following—

This for the writer of "Devil Dogs." I sent the mag to India without noting his name.

The Confederate Navy hits me, for my father's brother, James D. was Semmes's No. 1 on the *Alabama*. He visited us often just after the War, while seeking a pardon before Johnson's famous proclamation of amnesty. Two or three times he brought with him Commodore Tatnall, on the same errand. Jim call him "Tat" or "Commy" or "Blood," indifferently, the latter getting a squawk every time. You remember his saying to the British master whom he saved from Chinese pirates that "Blood is thicker than water." Both of them were rather slight men, bearded, "Tat" with a long beard, Jim with short whiskers all around. Both wore gray cits then. Tat was a commander in the U. S. service when he followed Lee and others South.

Miss Martha Poindexter, Jim's granddaughter, though my efforts to find her have come to naught, is here in New York. My sister told me before her death that Miss Martha was employed by a publisher here, but I did not learn where. She may have pictures of her grandfather, Semmes and Tatnall, and perhaps others. I have not. Jim was in the *Kearsarge* fight, but did not relish talking of the War.

Only a congressman belittled the fighting men of the South. I was very young, about ten, and my mother always said when the South was discussed "they had to do what they thought was right."

Albert Sidney and Joseph Eggleston were my father's cousins. Albert was killed, but I often saw General Joe when a young fellow.

—T. J. Johnstone,
51 Hamilton Place,
New York City

And this in reply from Russell—

I was certainly delighted with your most interesting letter.

I envy you your rich memories and close kinship to the gallant leaders of the South. While I was born and brought up in Boston, my father came from Maryland and I understand that my father's native state was much more in sympathy with the cause of the Confederacy than most people today realize. The rosters of many a Southern outfit will disclose that fact. In my research on the Confederate Navy I have found this to be true. Although I have never had the good fortune to meet any of the outstanding figures on either side, as a boy, I had a friend who had been with McClellan in all his campaigns. He carried both bullet and bayonet wounds to the day of his death and was bothered by them in damp weather. As a youngster of ten I used to talk to him of the Peninsula Campaign by the hour, dis-

cussing the accounts of the officers of both North and South as they appeared in "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War." He was a great admirer of both Lee and McClellan to the day of his death. He lived to see one of his own sons go overseas with the 101st Engineers in the last World War.

It is thrilling to read your letter with its familiar references to Admiral Semmes, your own uncle, and Commodore Tatnall with whom I have become acquainted through the memoirs and records they left. Your father's cousins, Generals Albert Sidney and Joseph E. Johnston were great men. Many believe that but for his early death at Shiloh General Albert Sidney Johnston would have carved a great military career and materially changed the fortunes of the South. But these events are all beyond the power of human beings who are but the instrumentalities of the Almighty, and therefore unchangeable. I must admit, however, that I bow my head in reverence at the mention of General Albert Sidney Johnston's name; for he was not only a brilliant leader but one of nature's noblemen.

Sincerely yours,
Henry G. Russell

Commenting to us on the fact that Mr. Johnstone had sent his copy of our magazine off to India, Mr. Russell adds—

Adventure certainly gets around. When I taught geography in high school and some of my high-brow colleagues in the English Department and one geography teacher, who had no conception of the quality of the magazine, used to rib me about reading pulps, I'd pull a few questions on place geography taken right from the stories of *Adventure*. They had no more conception of the location than the Man in the Moon, but now I imagine they are very glib on the same subject because these places have been prominent in the war news.

I am at work on another chapter of the book now—"Sea Spies of the South," the story of naval intelligence in the Confederacy. But for the actors in this little known drama the famous raider *Alabama* from which the Nazis learned their trade would never have got to sea, and Semmes first officer, Mr. Johnstone's uncle would have had a much different story to relate. There's a present day war-time angle in this story which shows how the naval intelligence of the South developed the techniques for commerce-destroyers that the Nazis, never an original people, are only able to ape.

Turning back to his article in this issue Mr. Russell appends the following notations from *Camp-Fire*—

For those who may be interested in further detail on the academic side of the Confederate States Naval Academy the complete four-year course as originally planned was as follows: *Fourth Class*—arithmetic, algebra through quadratics, English grammar, descriptive geography, practical seamanship, gunnery, infantry and artillery tactics; *Third Class*—advanced algebra, geometry and trigonometry, physical geography, history, French, seamanship, gunnery, infantry and artillery tactics; *Second Class*—advanced mathematics, navigation, astronomy, political science, French, seamanship and steam engineering, gunnery and field artillery; *First Class*—navigation, surveying, French and Spanish, seamanship and naval tactics, gunnery, infantry tactics.

Since the academy ran short of two academic years, this planned curriculum was not rigidly adhered to. The Confederate Naval Register shows class lists for fourth classmen, third classmen junior, and third classmen senior in 1864. There were, when not engaged in fighting, two full-time teachers of astronomy, navigation, and surveying; two in seamanship; and one each in gunnery, mathematics physics, modern languages, infantry tactics, and fencing. A visiting academic board, consisting of three captains and two commanders, held examinations in June and December prior to promotion. The wonder is, not that the planned schedule was changed or interrupted but that it was maintained at all. There are records of the participation of middies who appear on the register as underclassmen commanding small boats and leading boarding parties into the thick of the fight during numerous small but bloody and fiercely contested engagements on the coast. Homework, I should say, of a highly motivated though extremely grueling character.

And for the guidance of the artist, Paul Stahr, who made the illustration to accompany the article, Mr. Russell enclosed an old print of the *Patrick Henry* plus the following notes—all of

which proved immensely helpful and were much appreciated.

I think it would be advisable to add a bowsprit to any drawing of the Fighting Cadetship of the Confederacy based upon the print of the C. S. Steamer "Patrick Henry." While the print does not show one, my other sources of information definitely indicate a bowsprit while she was in the service of a schoolship. Then the illustration will coincide with my description on manuscript page 10. The print shows but two guns in broadside battery. These were 32-pounders. There were probably four of the original ten left in the broadside battery for instruction purposes, the other six, as well as the heavier fore-and-aft guns, having been removed to strengthen the defenses at Drewry's Bluff, before the *Patrick Henry* was converted into a schoolship.

The uniforms are pretty well described in the opening paragraphs but the following additional information may be helpful. The color was steel gray for coat, trousers, cap, and overcoat. Coat was double-breasted frock with rolling collar, having two rows of guilt buttons. The overcoat was also double-breasted. In warm weather white ducks were worn. Insignia appeared on the cap in gold: foul anchor in wreath of oak leaves with one star above anchor for a lieutenant. A master had no star above the anchor; and a midshipman had but the anchor without either wreath or star. The shoulder straps of the lieutenant and master has one-quarter inch borders in gold surrounding a field of sky blue edged with black. The lieutenant had one gold star in the field; while the master had the plain shoulder strap without the star; and the middy had just a strip of gold braid, running the length of a shoulder strap, four inches long and one-half inch wide. The lieutenant had a one-half inch gold stripe on the coat cuff, looped; the master a one-quarter inch stripe, looped. The midshipman had a one-quarter inch stripe surmounted by three small buttons. Enlisted men wore gray jacket and trousers with a black hat. There was also an all white uniform. With either they wore a black silk neckerchief. Since there were no officers above the rank of lieutenant in the story, I have not given the insignia on the higher ranks. The surgeons, paymaster, and engineer would have worn officers' uniforms with but slight variations in the shoulder strap insignia, the paymaster wearing crossed olive sprigs on a field of dark green, the two assistant surgeons one olive sprig on a black field, and the engineer, one oak sprig on a dark blue field. The cap was of the same shape as that worn by the Union Navy during the Civil War.

All of which indicates how we do try to be accurate and authentic in presenting material in these pages—both in writing and pictures. But errors will creep in. We pulled a prize boner in the April issue. Only one alert reader caught it so far so we're saving our little confession-session till next month!

ARTHUR HAWTHORNE CARhart's name has appeared on our contents once before, back in the April '39 issue as collaborator, with C. C. Staples, on a novelette, "Sunshiner." This month he authors a story solo and also joins our corps of *Ask Adventure* experts to handle the post recently vacated by Ernest W. Shaw. We are glad to have the opportunity to reintroduce Mr. Carhart in his double capacity. He writes from Walsenburg, Colorado—

Letter asking for *Camp-Fire* fuel arrived just as we took off for a trip down here to pick up 1800 more acres on the Apishapa refuge and to deal with a cowman on grazing a few cattle in return for keeping up fences and fighting poachers. We'll be down toward the Ute Reservation before we get back, into Mesa Verde Park and I expect to be in the thick of a cougar, puma, mountain lion, or whatever you elect to call it, hunt at Pagosa Springs come Thursday. Got a Bell and Howell with telephoto lens along and my own little Graflex. Best lion dogs in state, one of the best lion hunters, (in fact he was so good the State put him on a salary to avoid paying any more bounties) and an old Marine who is on my staff. Looks like it might be a good bit of travel before we get through.

Now my dossier for the headquarters record. Iowa-born, rural community. Went to little one-room white schoolhouse corner of farm, which was old tree claim patented by my granddaddy Hawthorne. Got first degree in landscape arch. Iowa State, 1916, believe it or not. Worked for season in Chi with large

(Continued on page 129)

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Notice: Many of our *Ask Adventure* experts are now engaged in government service of one kind or another. Some are on active duty in the Army or Navy, others serving in an executive or advisory capacity on various of the boards and offices which have been set up to hasten the nation's war effort. Almost without exception these men have consented to remain on our staff, carry on their work for the magazine if humanly possible, but with the understanding that for the duration such work is of secondary importance to their official duties. This is as it should be, so when you don't receive answers to queries as promptly as you have in the past please be patient. And remember that foreign mails are slow and uncertain these days, many curtailed drastically. Bear with us and we'll continue to try to serve you as speedily as possible.

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Archery—EARL B. POWELL, care of *Adventure.*

Baseball—FREDERICK LIEB, care of *Adventure.*

Basketball—STANLEY CARHART, 99 Broad St., Matawan, N. J.

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Wrestling—MURL E. THRUSH, New York Athletic Club, 59th St. and 7th Ave., New York City.

Yachting—A. R. KNAUER, 6720 Jeffery Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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Aviation: *airplanes, airships, airways and landing fields, contests, aero clubs, insurance, laws, licenses, operating data, schools, foreign activities, publications, parachutes, gliders* — MAJOR FALK HARMEL, 709 Longfellow St., Washington, D. C.

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North American Forestry: *The U. S. Forestry Service, our national forests, conservation and use*—A. H. CARHART, c/o *Adventure.*

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★New Zealand: Cook Island, Samoa—TOM L. MILLS, 27 Bowen St., Feilding, New Zealand.

★Australia and Tasmania—ALAN FOLEY, 169 Castlereagh St., Sydney, Australia.

★South Sea Islands—WILLIAM MCCREADIE, "Ingle Nook," 39 Cornelia St., Wiley Park, N. S. W., Australia.

Hawaii—JOHN SNELL, Deputy Administrator, Defense Savings Staff, 1055 Bishop St., Honolulu, Hawaii.

Madagascar—RALPH LINTON, Dept. of Anthropology, Columbia University, New York City.

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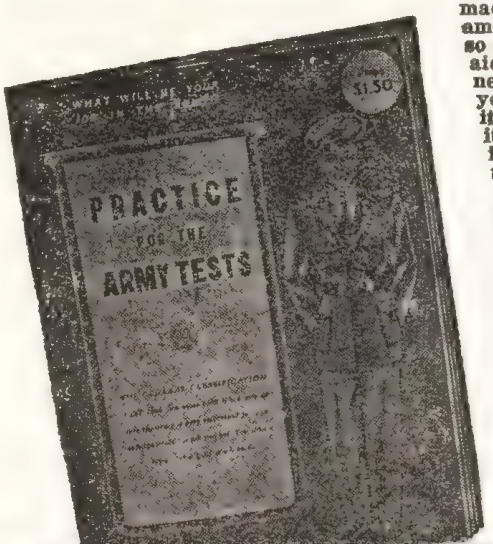

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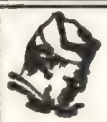

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ASK ADVENTURE

(Continued from page 6)

Just one more question before I sign off. Do you think that a boat like I have outlined would be as satisfactory as a lake model canvas covered canoe? Some of the old-timers scoff at my plywood boats but it is my belief that they will stand more hard use and are easier to keep in repair and to refinish.

—J. W. Denning
Illinois Wire & Manufacturing Co.
Joliet, Ill.

Reply by Raymond S. Spears:—I think you're right about plywood. Plywood and plastic are sure to modify all our future lines.

In the Adirondacks we had spruce-board boats 10 to 14 feet long, as narrow as 24 inches—but treacherous. We carried them on yokes socketed in the gunwales with the stern heavy enough to tip the bow up ahead. We crossed pretty wide water in autumnal winds—several miles sweep. We fished from them and they weighed around 100 lbs.

I wouldn't recommend the round-bottom, persimmon log, built-up sides pirogue, that I saw down the Mississippi—I mean that model. They were tippy and cranky. I think the boat you describe is fine, and you got a lot of boat in 140 lbs. Of course, it's heavy. And to get off 40 or 50 pounds, you'd sacrifice sides—perhaps 4 or 5 inches. I came down the Holston-Tennessee in a queer mountain skiff, 9 inch sides 36 inches wide (top and bottom) stern 26 inches and bow sharp. It's amazing with what one can get by!

Suppose you consider the Tennessee mountain "cunner"; I've seen them 18-feet long, 26 inches wide, 8 or 10 inches deep, perpendicular sides. The canoe model is our sweetest craft—the old Indian birch bark canoe rode like a dry leaf on the water. I saw an Indian family building one on Dog River out of bark, sewed with spruce roots, caulked with melted spruce gum. 9 feet long, 15 inches deep, flat bottom, and 34 inches wide—straight sides for 7.5 feet. For a man, a fat squaw and a buxom girl.

The old French fur-trade canoe—I saw the model at The Soo where Indians took tourists down the rapids. Flat bottom, parallel sides and slightly bulged out, ribs close, sides thin, three guard keels (to protect in drawing out, and from rocks, I suppose). The Tennessee cunners de-

(Continued on page 126)

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(Continued from page 124)

scended from hollow-log and bark canoes. The John-boat was (and is) square bow and stern, and, say, 18 inches deep amidships and up to 9 or 10 inches at bow, 12 or 14 inches at stern, (18 ft. long).

What I'm getting at is, if you narrow the model of that boat you have, to 36-inches, maximum, bottom 30-inches, and use ¼ inch ply instead of ⅜ths, you can save a lot of weight—but it reduces cargo capacity.

Instead of having a cut-water bow, bring it up to be a skimming dish—I came down Lake Superior in a 16-foot, 16-inch deep skiff, sharp at both ends, a modified St. Lawrence skiff. Saw some nice waves in it.

For three men, or even two men, shortening much under 12 feet cramps, especially in the narrowed boat.

I think you can figure pretty close how much weight you will save in plywood weight and thwarts, strips, etc. Trappers in marshes and long streams use as short as 9 feet for two, paddles and poles. Your smaller boat will handle nicely with paddles, especially if you approach the canoe-model. The old cedar St. Lawrence skiff, was made 12 feet up, and 36 inches up width—14 inches deep (approximate) and they were up from 100 lbs. weight. But the last time I was on the St. Lawrence I saw a lot of canoes, and some with outboards a good deal heavier than modern types, sterns cut square across. I don't like the canvas boats, though canvas glued to thin wood and painted adds to the strength.

I'd say a straight bottom, to the upspooning. Square stern—especially if using an outboard—brought up not too abruptly to stream line in the current.

36 inches is terribly wide for carrying on a yoke, as you'll see, putting your shoulders under a 3-foot rule. If you could manage 30 inches wide, and a canoe-model, 12-feet long, you'd have quite a lot of boat for two, with outfit, even with 14 inch sides bow and stern.

This isn't precise suggestion. The canoe-model was developed for light weight, for good carrying, for capacity according to size—maximum load with minimum boat weight. I doubt if any better model can be had for light-weight with large load capacity. Flat-bottom with strip protectors eliminates tippiness.

I don't want to lead you astray; I think your own model modified by canoe lines, bottom flat and sides parallel, narrowed will give you a craft for portages on a yoke, and a fishing boat, too.

LOST TRAILS

NOTE: We offer this department to readers who wish to get in touch again with friends or acquaintances separated by years or chance. Give your own name and full address. Please notify *Adventure* immediately should you establish contact with the person you are seeking. Space permitting, each inquiry addressed to Lost Trails will be run in three consecutive issues. Requests by and for women are declined, as not considered effective in a magazine published for men. *Adventure* also will decline any notice that may not seem a sincere effort to recover an old friendship, or for any other reason in the judgment of the editorial staff. No charge is made for publication of notices.

I should like to get in touch with Curzon P. Howe who used to live at Saranac Lake, N. Y. He is about 32 and at one time studied dentistry at, I believe, either St. Lawrence or Rensselaer Polytech. Please write P. B. Freer, Box 4, Liberty, Ohio.

Persons named Page from Sagrada, Camden Co., Mo., or relatives of William or Sanford Brown or any Nelsons from Seligman, Barry Co., Mo., are requested to write George E. Page, Gen. Del., Brawley, Calif.

Alvin U. Hodgdon, known as "Tex Ranger" was last heard of in Minnesota headed for either Chicago or New York. Age 44, he travels around playing a guitar and singing. Anyone knowing of his whereabouts please communicate with his brother-in-law, Pfc. Lee Kay, c/o *Adventure*.

Any information about my old friend, Peter Battleshiel, would be appreciated. We were in the army together several years. He is French-Canadian, about 47 years old and, I believe, lives in or near Detroit. Please communicate with Laurence J. Brown, RFD No. 2, Harrisburg, Ark.

Everett Ruess, 27, cowboy artist and writer, formerly of Los Angeles, last seen in St. Petersburg, Fla., May 1935. Anyone having information of whereabouts please communicate with Burton Bowen, VAF 2, Bath, N. Y.

Anyone knowing the whereabouts of Arthur Leo Messier, last seen about ten years ago in New York City and now believed in the West, please write Charles H. Hoffmann, c/o Veterans Hospital, Tucson, Ariz.

Any information concerning Doug Hayward, age 23, last residing in Chambersburg, Pa., will be most welcome and appreciated by Pvt. Peter Dunsky, c/o *Adventure*.

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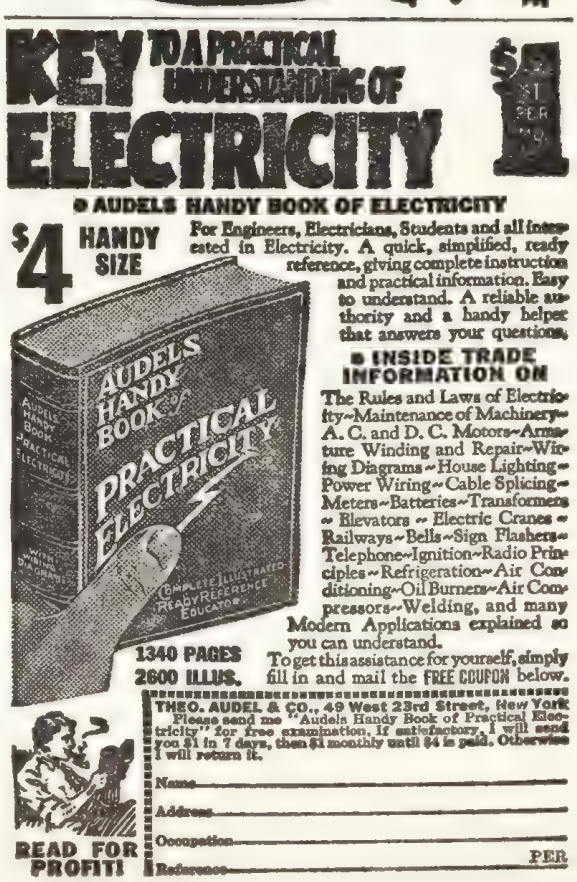
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THE TRAIL AHEAD

Brian O'Brien brings back Charlie Leeds, the Cameroons Cockney trader, to swap magic instead of ivory or palm oil with a white witch doctor who has set up shop among the Bulus under the sign of the hooked cross. The stranger's mighty mumbo-jumbo symbol turns out to be the—

"TUPPENNY TALISMAN"

—of all time, however, when Mr. Leeds recovers sufficiently from his malaria bout to start his own kettle of sorcery a-brewing.

A. H. Hoenninger takes us aboard *El Sueno—The Dream*—pride of the Nicaraguan navy, to chase subs from Puerto Cabezas north along the Central America coast with an Irish skipper, two Carib sailors and a terrier named Shamus for ship's company. We'd heard of hunting jaguars with dogs and subs with radio direction finders but in—

"THE PIG-BOAT AND THE PUP"

those roles are reversed and it's the dog who gets the sub and the beam that catches *El Tigre.* As unusual a novelette as we've read in many a moon.

Hal G. Evarts in "Exile" gives us a stirring tale laid along the Russo-Chinese border in wartime where every cartridge is worth its weight in gold and weapons are priceless. . . . Reese Wolfe in "Sew-Sew Woman" writes the log of the *Banda Maiden*—Honolulu to Batavia—with trouble every inch of the way. . . . Bill Adams returns after being absent from these pages far too long to ask "How Are Your Hands?" . . . Leslie T. White continues "Six Weeks South of Texas" and the amazing adventures of Randy Dent in the hinterland of the Mato Grosso. . . . Plus other exciting stories and fact features and the usual departments you'll find only in—

On Sale June 9th

(Continued from page 120)

firm. Then war. Enlisted buck private; came out 1st Lt. without going through training school. Had charge of sizeable lab at Camp Meade, Md., on waters, milks, ice creams, etc., at time war closed. Forest Service wanted to try out landscape architect in planning human (recreational) use of national forests. I was hired, sent to Denver, and for four years worked out of District office, (now Regional Office), in six states, 23,000,000 acres national forest, on recreational problems. Was first such man on full time payroll USFS. Now they have a dozen or so, normally, each Region. So I pioneered that. Was all over mountains of Colorado, Wyoming, Black Hills, lake country of Minnesota, some of Ontario. Horseback, canoe, etc.

Quit USFS 1922, Dec. 31, became partner in firm McCrary, Culley & Carhart, Landscape Architects and City Planners. At it 9 years.

Got into writing and that was paying more than landscape. Sold out my share in partnership 1932 and rode the depression on my typewriter.

Have ten books published; fact and fiction; plus hundreds of magazine articles and stories.

1938, October, Game & Fish Com. asked me to take on the organization of Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration this state. Dec. 1941, had 18 college trained wildlife technicians working under me getting game census, data on what game animals require in forage, predator relationships, etc, etc. War pulled every one of that crew! Check with Fish and Wildlife Service if you care to on where our program, this state, stands nationally in this program. It's pretty well up toward top. Have secured to state about 75,000 acres wildlife lands; and have wallowed through rehabilitation of log houses, irrigation systems, bridges, etc., etc. in getting properties in proper shape to function. Had one project on trapping and transplanting antelope. Thick in another now on re-establishing Merriam wild turkey in native range over at Pagosa where I'm going after cats.

With that background we think you'll agree that we are fortunate to be able to add Mr. Carhart to our staff and know his answers to queries on the Forestry Service; Forestry in the U. S.; national forests and North American big game hunting, guides and equipment, will be informative and accurate.

—K. S. W.

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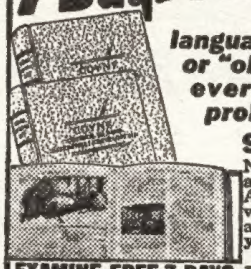

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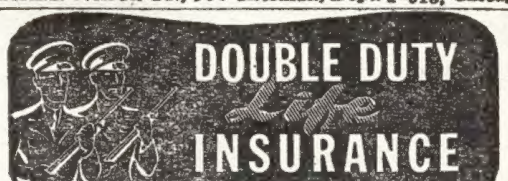

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(Continued from other side)

any one of his victims up—as they'll be cutting *me* in the next half hour—and you'll find nothing. And by the way, Mr. Colt—*YOU are on his list!*"

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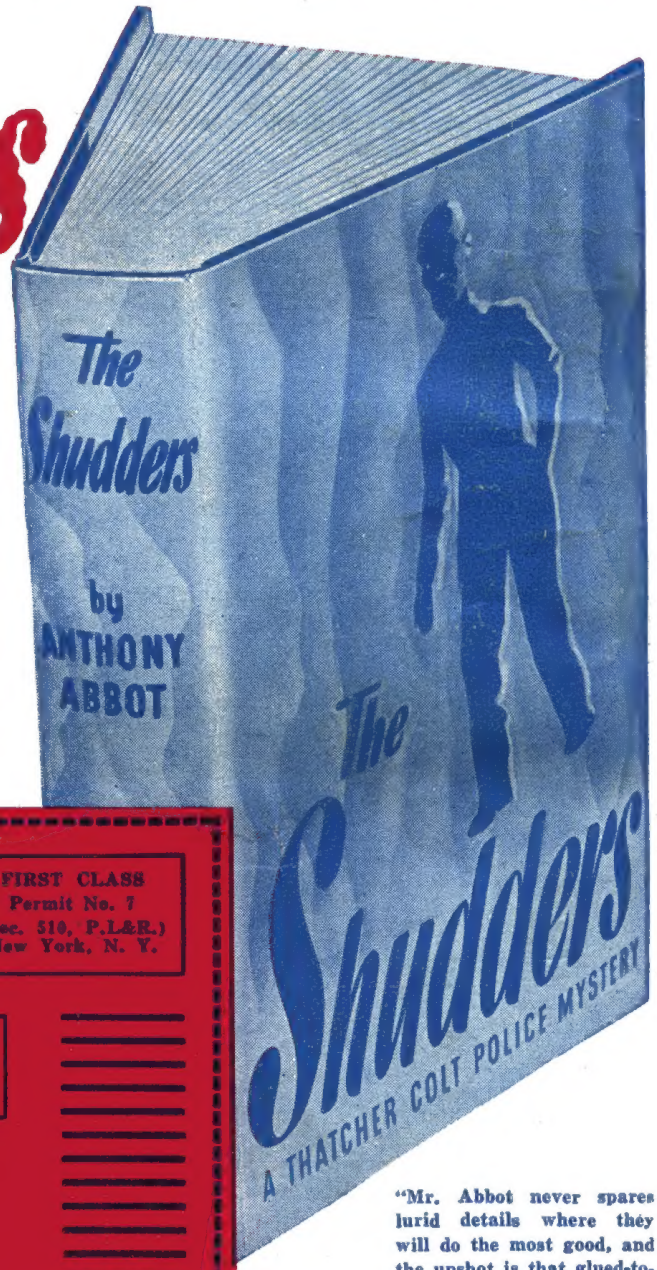
this fiend who killed for the sheer sport of killing?

"HE stole Marcella Kingsley from me—the only thing I have loved in this life. She is in another man's arms *tonight*—and I only minutes from the electric chair!

"I want Marcella punished, Mr. Colt. I want revenge. For this man is much more a criminal than I am. His crimes are murder. Murder for sport. *Murder upon murder upon murder!*

"*My* little murder was the bungled plot of an amateur. But *this* man has a way of murdering that is new. He scorns knife or gun or poison . . . and no fancy death rays, either. Just a little trick, as commonplace as it is deadly. *And it leaves* no trace. Cut

Continued on other side



"Mr. Abbot never spares lurid details where they will do the most good, and the upshot is that glued-to-the-chair feeling. Grade A thriller is right!"

—WILL CUPPY

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